

BREAKTHROUGH

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**BREAK THE CHAINS OF COLONIAL
VIOLENCE! SOLIDARITY WITH THE
REVOLUTIONARY PRISON MOVEMENT!**

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EDITORIAL

Marking the Life of George Jackson and the Uprising at Attica

It is now seven years since George Jackson was brutally shot down, murdered by US state police at San Quentin prison. It is seven years since the Attica Brothers at Attica, enraged by George's murder and all the conditions of genocide and imprisonment that they experienced inside Attica's walls, rose up in a courageous offensive action against the prison administration and the state. They were viciously repressed in a massacre which took thirty-two prisoners' lives.

It is only several months since Attica Brother Lou Asahi (Mariano Gonzalez) was murdered in a gun battle with two New York City Cops and Attica Brother Jomo Joka Omowale (Eric Thompson) was framed for Dalou's murder and the murder of the two pigs.

On August 1, 1978, Black freedom fighter Larry Tate (Jeffery Gauden) died at San Quentin, another victim of the genocidal prison system.

Despite the FBI claims that COINTELPRO was abolished in 1971, it is clear that the state's strategy to wipe out the revolutionary forces of Black national liberation continues unchanged since George's murder and the Attica massacre.

In the years since 1971, the white left has collaborated with the state's strategy by trying to obliterate the memory of George's politics and of his assassination. It has tried to whitewash its responsibility for retreating from solidarity with the Black Liberation Movement and the prison movement by developing political lines which ideologically wipe out the leadership of Black liberation even while the state is attempting to wipe it out militarily.

Now the revolutionary forces of Black liberation and other national liberation move-

ments are rebuilding inside and outside the walls of US prisons. They are teaching about the true history of the '60's, exposing COINTELPRO's war strategy against Black liberation; organizing to free revolutionary African freedom fighters, political prisoners and Prisoners of War; building movement for independence and freedom. Just in the past couple of months, prison rebellions have exploded at Pontiac and Stateville in Illinois, in Reidsville, Georgia and at Folsom, California.

We in the white left need to understand the history of COINTELPRO's military and psychological warfare strategy against the Black Liberation Movement. We also need to understand how the political leadership for anti-imperialist movement in the oppressor nation, which was coming from the forces of Black liberation, was temporarily wiped out through COINTELPRO.

In the past period in PFOC we have been self-critical of serious political errors in our line and practice which have worked against the leadership and strategies of national liberation movements. Because of white supremacist stakes in our own leadership, we have resisted seeing that national liberation movements lead the development of anti-imperialist movement in the oppressor nation. In struggling to rectify our errors, we have seen that the history of the '60's contains valuable lessons which point up the critical importance of Black and other revolutionary nationalist leadership in the struggle against US imperialism. This history clearly exposes the counterrevolutionary and genocidal role of the white left in collaborating with state attacks on that leadership. We need to grasp these lessons now in order to build solidarity movement which

will support the leadership of Black and other national liberation movements in their struggles against imperialism and colonialism. It is our responsibility to build solidarity movement which won't crumble with the onslaught of state attacks.

This issue of *Breakthrough* contains several articles related to this history. We hope people will struggle with this initial overview we are putting forward.

George Jackson was murdered because he was a Black revolutionary thinker and leader. He was developing a theory and practice which was helping to turn the prisons into centers of revolutionary nationalist activity in the face of the state's efforts to use the prisons to suppress Black liberation.

Mass Black uprisings in the streets, in the armies, in the schools, swept the country in the '60's. Black people were responding to centuries of colonial subjugation and violence with militant action and protest. The Black Panther Party grew up articulating a program which expressed the fundamental demand for Black self-determination and which opposed the colonial violence of the US state with armed self-defense.

While the Vietnamese were defeating the US militarily thousands of miles from US borders, the Black Liberation Movement was bringing the war home, exposing colonialism in the heart of the United States, leading revolutionary consciousness and motion against US imperialism from within its borders.

The imperialist ruling class and the state were conscious of the explosive impact which the Black Liberation Movement was having on imperialism's home base. It escalated its war strategy with the FBI development of COINTELPRO (1967), a program which was first and foremost aimed at wiping out the Black Liberation Movement. Starting with attacks on the Revolutionary Action Movement and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, the FBI went on to target the Black Panther Party because of its leading role within the Black movement. The FBI systematically moved against the Panthers, murdering its leaders—Bobby Hutton, Bunchy Carter, Fred Hampton, Mark Clark; jailing Huey Newton, Bobby Seale, Erica Huggins, the NY Panther 21, countless others; infiltrating its ranks, spreading lies, divisions, antagonisms. COINTELPRO targeted the most organized forces of Black liberation, but the

New Orleans police attack the headquarters of a Black Panther Party affiliate as part of a nationwide COINTELPRO war strategy against the Black liberation movement.

Barb/LNS





Black Panther Intercommunal News Service

Jonathan Jackson, William Christmas, James McClain and Ruchell Magee participated in a daring attempt to win freedom for Soledad Brothers by taking Judge Haley hostage in the Marin County Courthouse.

strategy was designed to terrorize all Black people, to smash all forms of Black rebellion.

The imprisonment of growing numbers of Black people and Black revolutionaries created a new conscious front of the Black Liberation Movement within the prison. (See *Notes From an Afrikan P.O.W. Journal, Books One and Two* for leading analysis of this development.) Black prisoners led in exposing prisons as genocidal institutions of national oppression and colonialism, designed to contain the revolutionary movement of colonized peoples within the US.

The year 1970 witnessed the development of mass resistance among prisoners to these oppressive conditions. Black and Latino inmates rose up in protest at New York City's Tombs prison. In January, 1970, prisoners at Soledad killed a white guard several days after the murder of three politically active Black prisoners. George Jackson, Fleeta Drumgo and John Cluchette were charged with the murder of the guard. In August 1970 Jonathan Jackson led an historic and courageous armed raid at the Marin County Courthouse in an effort to free George and the other Soledad Brothers. The state defeated this attempt in a callous and bloody shootout which

resulted in the murder of Jonathan and two Black prisoners, William Christmas and James McClain. Judge Haley, one of the hostages, was also killed. Ruchell Cinque Magee, the prisoner who survived the shootout, was recaptured and tried. His defense, like that of his African namesake, Cinque, was that slave mutiny and rebellion are justified acts.

A year later, the state intensified its assault on Black nationalist movement. On August 18, 1971, the FBI attacked the Republic of New Africa, arresting eleven of its members in Jackson, Mississippi. Three days later, on August 21, George Jackson was murdered. Three weeks later on September 13, thirty-two prisoners at Attica were murdered.

While the Black Liberation Movement was fighting to withstand the state's genocidal attacks, leading Black revolutionary forces called upon the white left for genuine and uncompromising solidarity. But the white left was in rapid retreat from the politics and practice of international solidarity which had been slowly developing in the '60's.



Jean Raisler

Support demonstration for captured Black Panther Party members in Oakland, 1970.

In the '60's, the Vietnamese and Black Liberation Movements shook the material reality and consciousness of white people across the country. The Black Liberation Movement threatened the foundations of the system of internal colonialism which the US oppressor nation had been built upon, causing tremendous repercussions throughout US society. Out of the mass civil rights and anti-war movements emerged a smaller but significant number of white people, mainly students, youth, women and ex-GI's, who were pushed by national liberation to view the conditions and struggles of white people in the context of the worldwide struggle against US imperialism. Some sectors began to understand that imperialism is based on the violent subjugation of whole nations outside and inside the borders of the US. They learned that genocidal warfare was necessary to maintain the domination of these nations and that the only way this warfare could be met and defeated was through armed struggle. Through the leadership of the Black Liberation Movement, numbers of white people began to support the Black struggle for self-determination. They were forced to recognize that white people had a different relationship to empire than Black and other colonized peoples, and that what was critical for

organizing masses of white people in the US on a revolutionary basis was to win them to support national liberation.

Although this "new left" developed unevenly and contained a wide range of political perspectives, overall it represented a significant challenge to the "old left's" white supremacist interpretations of US reality. Traditional left lines denied the existence of colonized peoples with the right to self-determination within the US, proclaiming that a multi-national, white-majority working class would be the exclusive agent of revolutionary change. This went along with a line that all forms of armed resistance to imperialism would have to wait until the masses of working class people understood that it was necessary. The old left theorized and debated about the working class and social change while Black liberation was exploding across the country. But students and young people saw that Third World peoples and parties were the ones who were really forcing change and defining the terms for that change. The new left rejected the sterile dogma of the old left, insisting that the true test of politics lay in action.

These initial steps away from opportunism and towards anti-imperialism were sharply

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ed in every area of oppressor nation ment. They were opposed by politics which ized on the basis of oppressor nation sts, placing the white working class at the r of world revolution. The Progressive Labor (PL) was the most outrageous example of positions at one point. PL chauvinistically mned the strategies of the National ation Front in Viet Nam, denounced Black tion as reactionary narrow nationalism and that the multinational industrial proletariat he only real leadership for revolution in the PL led the baiting of those parts of SDS that trying to act in solidarity with national ation by calling them liberal guilt trippers only paid attention to the struggles of others never to their own. They spoke to all the rial pulls on white people to abandon arity with the struggles of oppressed peoples instead to use their power as part of the essor nation to seek control over national ation movements.

PL's particular brand of opportunist politics much damage, helping to split and destroy as a force for active international solidarity. ever, many opposed them on the grounds that were "doctrinaire" instead of defeating the e supremacist assumptions behind their ics. Such assumptions were deeply rooted in white left, materially based in the power privilege of being part of the US oppressor

nation. Even those sectors of the white left which most clearly expressed solidarity with Black liberation still did not take consistent leadership from Black forces in practice, especially when such leadership conflicted with their own strategies. Opportunism continued to assert itself, under many new "left" covers, but with the same essential white supremacist content.

It wasn't necessary for the state to launch genocidal campaigns against the white movement in order to turn it away from anti-imperialist politics and international solidarity. By murdering and jailing Black leaders, COINTELPRO was not only destroying the leadership of the Black Liberation Movement but the political leadership for white anti-imperialist movement as well. Sections of the white left believed that revolution in the US was just over the horizon, because their conditions of life and relationship to the state, as white people meant that they had an idealistic view of what was necessary for revolution. But as COINTELPRO attacks accumulated, as more Black leaders than pigs were wiped out, the real life-and-death stakes involved and the protracted nature of the struggle became clearer.

COINTELPRO used all the weaknesses of the white left to push it away from international solidarity and towards collaboration with its attack on Black liberation. FBI infiltration, surveillance and rumor-mongering, as well as grand juries, were used to create a climate of



While the Black liberation movement was under sharp COINTELPRO attack, white youth defined 'youth culture' as their strategy for liberation.

paranoia and fear. The FBI actively fostered antagonisms between white and Black organizations. It encouraged white intervention in the struggles among Black forces to further the divisions it was cultivating.

In Spring, 1970, four white students were killed at Kent State University by National Guardsmen during a campus protest against the invasion of Cambodia. This was the state's decisive warning that murder would not be reserved for Third World people if whites continued to act in solidarity with national liberation. The white left and student movement responded with short term protests to this attack on them; but a few days later, when two Black students were killed at Jackson State, there was hardly any protest. White supremacist politics were gaining the upper hand in the student movement.

More and more, white leftists began to find alternatives to political activity and solidarity which placed them in sharp contradiction with the state. They found semi-comfortable niches in the country, absorbed themselves in drugs and youth culture. Other sections of the white left took a more well-worn path, consolidating around "multinational working class" politics which denounced Black nationalism as divisive and reactionary.

The Weather people who had gone underground to fight in solidarity with national liberation in winter 1970 began to abandon the actual practice of solidarity almost immediately. A month after Jonathan Jackson was killed trying to free his brother from San Quentin, the Weather Underground Organization (WUO) helped Timothy Leary, guru for the white youth/drug culture, escape from prison at San Luis Obispo. This action had nothing to do with the pressing need to support and free the growing number of Black political prisoners and Prisoners of War.

A few months later, the WUO articulated a "left" justification for the mass retreat of white youth into youth culture, drugs, good vibes. In "New Morning," they criticized what they called the "military error" of relying on guns and bombs to build revolution, precisely at a time when there was a crying need for armed solidarity with the Black Liberation Movement. The alternate direction which they put forth was building a base in the youth movement, developing a youth "nation." This strategy to integrate with the youth movement paralleled the economist attempts of other sectors of the white

left like PL or the RU to integrate with the white working class as the path to revolution. Both approaches opportunistically tailed the Black movements instead of struggling to lead the movements towards internationalist politics and commitment. These political lines rationalized white abandonment of Black liberation during the heaviest period of state attack.

* * * * *

When George Jackson was killed, there were no mass protests on the part of the "young nation" or the white left. There were a few armed actions following the murder, reflecting a level of outrage, but these actions were not sustained. The most militant responses came from the forces of Black liberation. The Black Liberation Army (BLA) retaliated with a series of armed offensives. (See BLA article.) The most massive protest came from inside the prisons. Attica exemplified the refusal among prisoners across the country to accept the intolerable terms of genocide any longer.

When the prisoners at Attica rose up bringing world attention to the oppressive genocidal conditions of US prisons, again there was little white movement support. There were no mass demonstrations outside the gates which could have put a brake on Rockefeller's blood plans, no nation-wide demonstrations after the massacre to oppose the state's use of war tactics against imprisoned colonized peoples.

After Attica, the state continued to move against the Black movement, particularly against the Black Liberation Army (BLA), which was launching armed actions to counter the state's armed repression and terror. Most of the white left, consolidating behind an opportunist politics, collaborated with the state's attacks by denouncing the BLA as terrorist and adventurist, denying support to the BLA Prisoners of War.

In the wake of COINTELPRO's devastating effects on Black liberation, dominant forces in the white left such as the Revolutionary Union (RU), the October League (OL), and the Guardian, tried to reassume leadership of all revolutionary struggle in the US by asserting that only a unified, multinational working class and party could make revolution. At a time when Black prisoners were out of necessity providing leadership for Black national liberation struggles, the white left turned its back on this leadership and on solidarity with the prison movement and made workplace organizing the



WW photo

The mass Black liberation movement is developing once again. 2000 Black people marched in Brooklyn to protest the police murder of a Black leader, and the state-sanctioned attacks on Black people by Hassidic vigilantes.

priority instead. Prison organizing that did occur within the white left was based on a view that prisons were instruments of class rule oppressing all poor and working class people alike. History was being rewritten and the teachings of the '60's were being erased from people's consciousness.

Neither the state attacks nor the opportunist politics of the white left could suppress the Black Liberation Movement for long. Over the past few years, the leadership and activity of Black revolutionary nationalist forces has been rebuilding inside and outside of prisons. Pro-independence forces are countering opportunist lines, which try to submerge Black liberation within the multinational working class, with clear demands for self-determination and independence. They are exposing COINTELPRO and its genocidal attacks against the Black Liberation Movement. They are demanding the freedom of Black political prisoners and Prisoners of War like Assata Shakur, Sundiata Acoli, the RNA-11, Dessie Woods. They are building African prison organization which can target the prisons as one of the key violent institutions responsible for maintaining colonialism. They are defining the responsibility of white left forces to organize in solidarity with all fronts of their national

liberation movement, including the prison movement, under Black leadership.

The rebuilding of the Black national liberation movement is once again changing the terms of struggle in the white left. It is becoming less possible for the left to deny the reality of anti-colonialist struggle, to forget about political prisoners, to ignore the impact of COINTELPRO. However, the struggle to build genuine solidarity movement with Black national liberation is in its very beginning stages. The dominant opportunist forces in the white left are still powerful and continue to influence the consciousness and practice of the white left. The state is already trying to smash the growth of Black nationalist leadership. We can also expect that it will attempt to disrupt any efforts to build international solidarity within the oppressor nation.

The history of the '60's shows that anti-imperialist movement in the oppressor nation develops as national liberation, particularly Black liberation, strengthens. Now is the time to organize active support for the programs which Black liberation is putting forward. The spirit of George Jackson and of Attica lives on in these struggles. We in the white left must understand our responsibility in trying to bury that spirit in the past. We must commit ourselves to fight in solidarity with that spirit and struggle now! □

ATTICA MASSACRE

On April 2, 1978, Attica Brother Dalou Asahi (Mario Gonzalez) was killed in a gun battle by New York City police. The two pigs were also killed. Dalou was one of the leaders of the Attica Rebellion in 1971, and one of the sixty-two Brothers indicted by the state of New York for alleged "crimes" committed during the rebellion. He had been a fugitive since 1975, having chosen to disappear rather than to allow the state to try him on the fabricated charge that he had killed

Breakthrough is reprinting portions of the press statement issued by the Attica Committee to Free Dacajeweah on the events of April 2nd, along with writings by Dalou and Jomo. Although seven years have passed since the Attica rebellion, Dalou's murder and Jomo's brutal arrest show that the uprising at Attica—and the state's genocidal response—cannot be put on the shelf as past history only to be forgotten about. The racist and inhuman conditions which bred the



Dalou Asahi

Attica - Then & Now

another inmate during the uprising. He would have faced a possible life sentence if convicted.

Shortly after the April 2nd shootout, another Attica Brother, Jomo Joka Omowale (Eric Thompson), was arrested in a car accident and charged with the murder of the two pigs and Dalou. He was put in an ambulance by two off-duty cops, who tried to kill him, smashing several bones in his face—and then *he* was accused to trying to kill *them*. One of these two pigs, James Denedy, has a long record of harassment and brutality against Black people.

resistance at Attica continue to breed resistance at prisons across the country, because these conditions have not been corrected. None of the demands of the Attica Brothers have been met.

One of the most important of these demands was for "complete administrative and legal amnesty to all persons associated with this matter." The state of New York has been forced by public pressure to drop the charges and/or "pardon" most of the Attica Brothers. Their kangaroo court trials only served to expose the truth which the state was maneuvering to cover

CRE CONTINUES

up: the pigs had the rifles, the tear gas, the helicopters; the pigs launched the assault; and the pigs committed the murder of thirty-two Brothers and eleven of their own.

One of the Attica Brothers, Dacajeweiah, a Native American, is presently serving a sentence of twenty-to-life in Sing Sing, framed and convicted in 1975 for the alleged murder of a prison guard during the uprising. He is the only Attica Brother still in prison on charges stemming

waged. Resistance to domestic colonialism, to imperialism, to genocide is growing. And revolutionary freedom fighters are still being hunted, hounded, framed, caged and murdered.

Working to free Dacajeweiah and Jomo is an important part of rebuilding our support for the revolutionary prison movement. Exposing their imprisonment as an attack on national liberation struggles and securing their freedom—as well as the freedom of the many hundreds of other



Jomo Joka Omowale

Marion Roth

from the rebellion. He is the state's scapegoat. We are also printing material on his case.

We cannot allow ourselves to be tricked into believing that Attica is "over." The Attica massacre was part of a genocidal state war strategy to smash Black liberation and other national liberation movements, to maintain the colonial domination of oppressed nations within US borders. The state response to the Attica rebellion was cold and calculated—a massive armed assault against courageous freedom fighters. Attica was a battle. The war is still being

Prisoners of War in concentration camps across the US—is a critical task for the solidarity movements in the oppressor nation. It is our responsibility to support these leaders of the liberation struggle. Silence and inaction clear the way for the next massacre.

**FREE JOMO JOKA OMOWALE!
FREE DACAJEWEIAH!**

ATTICA LIVES



Attica Memorial Book

In retaking Attica, NY State forces killed dozens of prisoners.

April 6, 1978

ATTICA MASSACRE CONTINUES ATTICA BROTHER KILLED IN GUN BATTLE WITH POLICE

...The police and the press have seized upon these events to unleash a flood of vicious racist and reactionary propaganda. They have concocted slanderous lies about the two Brothers and their families. They have attempted to rewrite the history of the Attica uprising and prosecution. They have suggested that such incidents can be prevented by providing stiffer sentences, abolishing parole, and reinstating the death penalty. They have issued ugly slurs on entire communities and stirred up the vilest racist fears and hatreds.

We issue this statement to clear up the lies and to place these events in their *proper historical and political context*.

The Attica Rebellion of September, 1971, was the culmination of years of unrest and protest in the prisons of New York State and the entire country. It was recognized throughout the world as a disciplined, justified, and fully necessary act of rebellion against intolerable conditions inside and outside U.S. prisons.

The rebellion was crushed by the bloodiest massacre of Americans by Americans since the Indian Wars. Forty-three men were left dead in its wake. Hundreds were wounded, beaten, and tortured. The massacre was approved by then-Governor of New York Nelson Rockefeller and carried out by state troopers, prison guards, and sheriffs' deputies.

A special prosecutor's office was set up after the massacre, and it soon became clear that its task was to punish the rebelling prisoners who were not already dead, especially those who took the most active roles in the uprising. There was never any serious investigation of the officials who had shot scores of unarmed men at point-blank range. Sixty-two prisoners were named in forty-two indictments, charging them with crimes from contraband to murder.

But the prisoners at Attica had been heard. Throughout the world, thousands of people contributed to their defense. Despite the prosecution's seemingly overwhelming advantages in court, the bulk of the Attica prosecution was defeated.

Yet some fell victim. One young Indian, Dacajeweiah (John Hill), was convicted of killing a guard and sentenced to a life term, which he is still serving.

Seven men were convicted of relatively minor crimes, six of them through plea bargaining. One of these was Jomo Joka Omowale (Eric Thompson), who was shot seven times at Attica and faced a frame-up on multiple murder charges. Jomo began presenting evidence in court of the atrocities committed by state



Attica - Then & Now

"We are men. We are not beasts, and we do not intend to be beaten or driven as such."

—L. D. Barkley (second from left).

cialists which had never been investigated. This evidence so threatened the Attica prosecution that they were willing to drop their trumped-up murder charges and make a plea deal carrying no additional prison time.

Some men became fugitives rather than face trials which were heavily stacked against them. One of these was Dalou Asahi (Mariano Gonzalez), who became a fugitive shortly after the conviction of Dacajeweiah. He had been one of the most committed and eloquent organizers on behalf of all the Attica Brothers, both inside the prisons and on the streets.

On December 30, 1976, Governor Hugh Carey claimed to "close the books" on Attica. Conceding that the prosecution was hopelessly corrupt, he pretended to stop it. He *did* stop all the investigations of state officials (which had been only recently begun). He *did* pardon the seven Brothers (including Jomo) with no convictions, but none of them were still in prison on their Attica charges.

But he *did not* pardon Dacajeweiah, who is still serving a life term. And he *did not* drop the charge against Dalou, who remained a fugitive.

We do not know exactly what happened on Willoughby Street in Brooklyn on April 2, 1978, and we may never know. So far we only know the police versions, and like the stories of slashed throats at Attica in 1971, time will show that these accounts are self-serving and untrue.

We do know that Dalou was sought—almost seven years later—for his role in the Attica uprising, and that he faced a framed-up Attica murder charge if he was caught. We know that he was determined not to be captured, not to risk spending the rest of his life in prison for a crime he did not commit. We know that if Governor Carey really "closed the book" in December, 1976, Dalou would no longer have been a fugitive and the incident in Brooklyn might not have happened.

We know that the gunfire on Willoughby Street was the same gunfire that killed the men at Attica in September, 1971—and the same gunfire that killed political leaders like Malcolm X and George Jackson and common folks like Clifford Glover and Randolph Evans.

We know that Dalou and Jomo are not the "hoodlums" and "terrorists" described in the daily press. We know them as strong, militant, selfless, intelligent, highly respected and beloved leaders. They have enriched the lives of many people; they have been teachers; they have made us laugh and cry.

We know that the "books" are not closed on Attica. We know that Dacajeweiah is still in prison for a crime that he did not commit. We know that Jomo now faces a mockery of a murder trial after having been immediately convicted in the press. We know that scores of families have been bereaved by Attica, and

that hundreds of people walk the streets with wounds that Attica created that will never heal. We know that the criminal justice system is every bit as unjust and explosive as it was in 1971—and that it is becoming worse, not better.

We know that this society can not survive. We know that it is based on an economic system that is irrational and cruel, and that it is creating the very forces within it which will eventually destroy it. And we know that history will ultimately recognize Dalou and Jomo as heroes, and that their struggle—our struggle—will be victorious.

ATTICA IS ALL OF US!

HUNGER

i was a ghetto's kid
just one in a family
of 9, living in a
4 room apt. we called
it a penthouse—though
i was hungry.

i was a ghetto's kid
in the spring, no
clothes on easter, hitting
bodegas, getting caught and
cut loose—though,
i was hungry.

i was a ghetto's kid
in the summer, playing
in the street's pump, got
hit by a car twice,
but it was nothing, i got
well—though
i was hungry.

i was a ghetto's kid
in the autumn, no
welfare check, mama didn't
pay the bill, the landlord
cut off the light and
the boiler broke
down—though
i was hungry.

i was a ghetto's kid
in the winter, throwing
snowballs in someone's face,
in a car, in a taxi, or
in a bus, i got kicked,
stabbed and shot—cause,
i was hungry.

but now i'm locked up,
and sometimes i wonder,
"am i a ghetto's kid?"
must be, cause—
i am still hungry.

Dalou Asahi

Excerpts from an Interview with Jomo 1974

My point is that most of us have been led to believe that revolution only means violence, death, blood and destruction of a people or a race. I am not going to say revolution won't involve some violence or the loss of some blood, and maybe death to some of us in some cases. *But so does so-called "law and order,"* and that's why unarmed black children get shot in the back of their heads and sisters and brothers are being murdered in cold blood in the prisons and the streets of the ghettos every day somewhere in this country.

I would like to remind you, especially the poor, and oppressed black and Third World people of Amerika, that the term revolution does not imply only (or first) violence, or death or blood. The very first thing revolution means is CHANGE, and

there is no way in hell you can make me believe that the oppressed don't want to change from the oppressive conditions, and revolution should be a means we embrace in order to change the social and economic conditions we presently exist under in this country. If we move to deal with changing the conditions which one slaves (or lives) under, or if one even seeks change in one's dreams or wishes, then we are seeking, moving, dealing with the same "revolution"—because its first and true meaning is none other than "change." One who fears change also fears life, love, freedom and liberation on all levels. For change/revolution starts with the seeds of changing within the mind, changing our thinking from the way the system has conditioned us to think about our very lives.

—Jom



Attica-Then & Now

FREE DACAJEWEIAH

Dacajeweah is currently serving a twenty-sentence in New York state for allegedly William Quinn, a guard who was wounded Attica uprising and later died. Dacajeweah's comment on the charge: "I can't remember ever seeing the corrections officer I was killed. At first they said he was thrown out the window. Well, all the windows are barred." During the months before his trial in 1975, Dacajeweah, along with many other Attica prisoners, toured the country raising funds and public support for their defense. In the speeches he made, he explained that the indicted prisoners were victims of racist brutality and oppression; that their rebellion was a necessary righteous act of liberation; and that the blood-soaked criminal Attica massacre was on the hands of the warden, his armed death squad—not the inmates'.

Dacajeweah spoke about the history of US state-sponsored genocide and land theft committed against Native peoples and their forced migration to barren reservation lands. He organized support for the continuing struggles of Native peoples for sovereignty and self-determination against genocidal attacks, particularly focusing on the courageous occupation of Wounded Knee in 1973.

It was in this context that he viewed—and we must view—his case. Dacajeweah, like hundreds of other nationalist Prisoners of War, was prosecuted not for any criminal act he committed, but because he dared to fight for the people's liberation.

He was convicted on perjured and bribed testimony, backed up by hysterical racist press and the judge's refusal to allow any testimony

on the conditions at Attica which led to the rebellion. Dacajeweah and his co-defendant Charlie Joe Pernasilice (who was convicted of a lesser charge and later pardoned) were not allowed to speak on their own behalf. The prosecution made a special effort to get a conviction because this was the only case in which an inmate was charged with killing a guard.

A year and a half after the conviction, Governor Carey commuted Dacajeweah's sentence, making him eligible for parole. But he remains in prison. The parole board denied him parole in January 1977, stating, "your release at this time could cause a widespread negative community reaction and would probably promote disrespect for the law."

Dacajeweah explains:

"As you know, I went to the parole board and there was a whole lot of opposition to my release, particularly from the guards' union. Telegrams were being sent to the warden and the parole board, threatening that if they released me, there would be no support for them in the upcoming elections, in particular for Governor Carey. Acting parole chairman Edward Hammock himself was facing a confirmation hearing for his \$42,000 a year job along with two other acting parole commissioners.

"But the only thing that it (clemency) accomplished was that Carey duped people into believing that he was applying equal justice all the way around, and that he was going to 'close the book' on Attica.

"But in reality all he did was give out a few token pardons to Brothers who really didn't

have to serve no time anyway. He let at least twenty officials, who committed unjustifiable homicide on the 13th of September, 1971, during the rebellion, go off scott free from any kind of legal repression arising from the massacre.

"In the meantime, I'm stuck with the whole burden behind the dupe. I'm still doing twenty years to life—every two years for the next twenty years, or even to the next fifty years the parole board could turn me down if they want."

Now it has developed, after seven years, that Rockefeller suppressed a special report by members of his immediate staff which showed that Dacajeweah could not have been guilty, and contained statements which proved that the state's witnesses lied at his trial. In addition, a detailed report of several outright murders of inmates, and widespread destruction of evidence by New York state police and members of the

prison staff and the Department of Corrections, have also finally been obtained.

A writ was filed in July to set aside Dacajeweah's conviction based on this blatant misconduct by the prosecution, and either to grant a new trial or drop the original indictment altogether. A ruling on this writ is expected soon. Two other appeals demanding Dacajeweah's release are also pending. Public pressure is an important factor in the struggle to get Dacajeweah out by the end of the year, when he again goes before the parole board. Write Governor Hugh Carey, Albany, New York, and let him know what you think of Dacajeweah's illegal incarceration. For current information, and to get a copy of the pamphlet "Attica Then and Now," write: Attica Committee to Free Dacajeweah, c/o Fink & Meyers, Attorneys at Law, 350 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10013.

Our thanks to the Attica Committee for help with information and graphics for this article.



Throughout the New York State prison system, the spirit of Attica lives on. At Eastern Correctional Facility, Napanoch, N.Y., Black and Latin prisoners have waged a long, determined struggle against the Ku Klux Klan and the intolerable prison conditions they are living under. Four years ago, Earl Schoonmaker, a teacher at the prison, was exposed as the Grand Dragon of the New York State Klan. On August 8, 1977, the prisoners' struggle broke out in open rebellion. Over 200 prisoners seized a wing of the prison and fourteen hostages, demanding: 1) the firing of two guards, Budd and Sluka, who were suspected of being Klan members; 2) decent food and sanitary mess-hall conditions; 3) passage of "good time" legislation; and 4) amnesty for all involved.

The rebellion was brutally smashed. Leaders

DEFEND THE AUGUST 8th BRIGADE

were transferred to other prisons and thrown in the "box." Many were indicted on felony charges. These Brothers have formed the August 8th Brigade, to continue to fight for the four demands. In July of this year, the two guards, Budd and Sluka, were shipped to Green Haven state prison. They were assigned to the same unit where Brigade members had been transferred after the rebellion. On July 26, Green Haven was sealed off to the outside and, without prior notice, Brigade prisoners were illegally transferred to Sing Sing. At press time, no further information on this latest maneuver was available.

Breakthrough is reprinting the prisoners' first communique. For more information, and to support their struggle, contact the August 8th Brigade Defense Committee, P.O. Box 524, New York, NY 10036.

Communique No. 1
 Subject: August 8th Takeover
 Date: September 13, 1977

SO LET IT BE HEARD. . .

THAT WHEREAS

After a long train of abuses, including intolerable living conditions, racist oppression and open Ku Klux Klan aggression and

After receiving no redress from any other quarter, including complaints from the Liason and Grievance Committees, letters to the Warden and the Commission on Corrections, petitions and complaints from prisoner organizations, aborted state investigations and costly state and federal litigation...

Prisoners rose up in righteous resistance on August 8, 1977 from every nationality and political persuasion to protest these barbaric conditions by the only means of redress left open to them, the seizure of the Napanoch prison complex, and that

WHEREAS

Such action, though spontaneous, was precipitated by the continuum of said abuse and conditions, and was in fact a reflection of the mass discontent of all New York State prisoners in general, and all Napanoch prisoners in particular, and that...

Such action was both inevitable and unavoidable so long as oppressive conditions were tolerated and encouraged, and similar such actions will most assuredly be replicated unless said conditions are completely eradicated...

That such action was justifiable in the eyes of all humanity, and only plausible and predictable in the light of human logic and reason, and that

WHEREAS

Those men singled out by the State as the "criminal" leaders of the August 8 Takeover were infact those chiefly responsible for averting a major blood bath, articulating the just demands of the prison population and facilitating the safe release of the hostages, and that...

Those men, who now face criminal prosecution and intensified State recrimination, and who have been locked down under inhumane conditions in prisons all over the state and held in isolation from other prisoners since August 8, only exemplify the State's intention to use them as political "scapegoats" while disregarding totally the real motive force of the rebellion: RACIST CONDITIONS WHICH APPROACH THOSE OF CHATTEL STAVERY...

THEN LET IT BE KNOWN

That we who are these men do hereby make this Declaration:

*To oppose the State's reactionary intentions;
 To expose fully the magnitude of inhumane prison conditions;
 To express our right as prisoners to rebel against said conditions; and
 To reaffirm our commitment to the full eradication of all forms of racism and organized white supremacy in all state prisons.*

Attica is All of Us!

The Napanoch August 8th Brigade

CLAIM NO EASY VICTORIES

Another Look at IWY

In the Spring '78 issue of *Breakthrough*, PFOC put out an article on the Houston International Women's Year Conference which declared the Conference a "victory" for women's liberation. (See "IWY-Houston," *BT*, Vol. II, No. 1.) In the article, we claimed that the Conference laid the basis for "a new stage in the women's movement" based in international solidarity and "women's solidarity." Since that time, we have been pushed by the sharp criticisms of oppressed and oppressor nation revolutionary forces to re-examine IWY and our political line on women's liberation which was the basis for our evaluation of IWY. We have taken up the political struggle around IWY as part of an overall criticism of the contents of the entire political line of our organization.

Through this struggle we've concluded that our analysis of IWY was opportunist and wrong. We distorted what happened at IWY to fit our political line on women's liberation—a line which contained fundamental errors rooted in white supremacist interests and world view.

Both our analysis of the Convention and our line on women were developed on the basis of the experience and interests of oppressor nation women. Our line was not based on the reality that national liberation movements are leading the worldwide struggle for women's liberation in the context of their fight to overthrow imperialism. Instead, we have posed national liberation and women's liberation as two separate and virtually equal anti-imperialist movements. This view works against the central understanding which

national liberation movements have struggled for—that the revolutionary struggle for women's liberation must be waged as an integral part of the struggle against imperialism, a struggle which is being led by the national liberation movements. In elevating the struggle for white women's liberation to be an equal anti-imperialist force with national liberation, we exceptionalized white women from the contradictions of being part of an oppressor nation. We ended up essentially placing women's liberation outside of the framework of the principal contradiction under imperialism: the division of the world into oppressor and oppressed nations.

In our analysis of IWY, we liquidated the serious white supremacist weaknesses of the Convention in the guise of "building on strengths to overcome weaknesses" within the women's movement. The white women's movement has been a progressive movement in the sense that it has challenged male supremacist institutions which are integral to the imperialist system. But the women's movement, like other social movements in the oppressor nation, has not generally acted in solidarity with national liberation. Our analysis of IWY undercut the only basis on which anti-imperialists can struggle for internationalist consciousness and practice within the women's movement: by honestly identifying the obstacles to internationalism and struggling to overturn them.

As Cabral teaches so clearly, you cannot build revolutionary movement by telling lies about what is really happening or claiming easy victories which have not occurred. In PFOC, and in the white left as a whole, we have had to learn that lesson over and over again.

The oppression of women in oppressor nations serves an important material function in

Note: The title of this article is taken from an essay by Amílcar Cabral, "Tell No Lies, Claim No Easy Victories." Cabral was the leader of the victorious anti-colonial revolution in Guinea Bissau. He was assassinated by agents of imperialism.



Women in Vietnam

Madame Dinh and Vietnamese guerrilla fighters. The Vietnamese led in showing that the struggle for women's emancipation is an essential part of anti-imperialist struggle.

maintaining imperialism. PFOC is committed to the struggle for women's liberation as a necessary part of building overall revolutionary anti-imperialist movement in the US oppressor nation. There are many difficult political questions to be answered in order to develop a correct line and strategy for building anti-imperialist women's movement. In the past we saw ourselves developing political line and strategy in isolation from other revolutionary forces. We arrogantly rejected many criticisms, particularly around our line on women, which might have helped us overturn our errors sooner if we had paid attention to them. We are understanding better now that we will not be able to develop a correct political line without political leadership from revolutionary forces of national liberation and ongoing struggle within the white left. By taking responsibility for our past errors, we hope this article can lay a basis for principled struggle which will lead to more correct conclusions in the future.

PFOC'S ANALYSIS OF IWY

From the start, we developed our analysis of IWY on an incorrect basis. We viewed the Convention as the state's effort to contain the white women's movement and prevent it from taking on the struggle against state-sponsored attacks on abortion, the ERA, and gay rights. However, we never looked at how the state was using the Convention to attack national liberation movements, how it could be using the oppressor

nation women's movement against national liberation. After the Conference, the May 19 Communist Organization (formerly NY PFOC) put out a pamphlet entitled "The Houston Women's Conference: A Victory for US Imperialism—Defend It or Defeat It." The analysis in this pamphlet was a big push to us to re-examine all the assumptions behind our line on IWY. In this pamphlet May 19th analyzes the strategy which US imperialism has been trying to implement since the Mexico City International Women's Year Conference in 1975. They state that this strategy included, among other points, "holding white women in the advanced imperialist nations up as the leadership of the worldwide struggle for women's liberation and peace; posing the main obstacle to the liberation of Third World women to be the men of their nations (and a few thoughtless men in the Agency for International Development) and that therefore Third World women have more in common with white women than their own peoples." (p. 2)

Our analysis focused on the struggles of the oppressor nation women's movement without seeing how white women's struggles can be turned against oppressed nation peoples. Our analysis essentially reinforced the state's strategy, which was based on defining political movement among women worldwide on white women's terms. In our analysis of IWY we identified the successes of the Convention on terms defined by white women, applauding the passage of resolutions supporting the ERA,

abortion and gay rights as victories for women's solidarity. We didn't look at what the real impact of this "multinational"/white-dominated women's Convention was on the struggle against colonialism and national oppression. We didn't see that the state set the Convention up to legitimize neo-colonialist type solutions to colonized women's struggles, solutions which would co-opt the struggle for self-determination and independence. Instead, we accepted the multinational framework of the Convention and tried to cover this up by defining certain anti-racist stands as manifestations of international solidarity. A few examples show the seriousness of our errors.

In the last *Breakthrough* article, we pointed to white women's support for a "minority resolution" developed by Third World women's caucuses at the Convention as an example of international solidarity. The demands in the resolution included support for affirmative action, bilingual education, tribal sovereignty for Native Americans and opposition to involuntary sterilization. The fact that white women did support this resolution was progressive and anti-racist, particularly in the context of the increasingly reactionary stands the white working class as a

whole has been taking regarding these issues. However, taking a stand against certain racist practices is a far cry from standing in solidarity with national liberation movements. The demands which the minority resolutions raised were primarily for equality within the imperialist system. Except for the demand for Native American sovereignty, neither the content of the resolutions or the terms on which it was accepted by the whole convention represented a consciousness that the struggles of Black, Native American, Chicano/Mexicano and Puerto Rican women are struggles of their whole peoples against colonialism and for self-determination. By hailing the adoption of this resolution as an example of international solidarity, we distorted the meaning of international solidarity and actually reinforced neo-colonial definitions which pose the struggle of colonized peoples as a struggle against discrimination and racism.

We emphasized the fact that a demand for Native American sovereignty was included in the "minority" resolution. But we undercut the significance of the fact that the resolution also declared that "Puerto Rican women emphasize that they are citizens of the US and wish to be



Lolita Lebron, Rafael Cancel Miranda and Andres Figueroa Cordero being arrested after their attack along with Irvin Flores on Congress, demanding independence for Puerto Rico. The case of these prisoners of war was not permitted to reach the floor of the IWY convention.

recognized and treated as equal," and the fact that the case of Lolita Lebron and the Four Nationalist Prisoners was prevented from making it to the convention floor. Puerto Rican comrades have correctly criticized us for calling any conference where the struggle for Puerto Rican independence is suppressed a victory for international solidarity. They have shown how such definitions legitimize neo-colonial representatives as spokespeople for Puerto Ricans.

Similarly, as the May 19th pamphlet pushed out, it was hardly a victory for international solidarity that the Ku Klux Klan was allowed to participate in the democratic arena of debate and parliamentary procedure. We saw the fact that delegates at the Convention opposed the Klan's program for *women* as the significant issue. But the Klan's program of organized genocide against colonized peoples, its terrorist activities against Mexicanos on the borders, its murder of Black prisoners, were never dealt with by the majority of the delegates at the Convention. Instead, the efforts of some Black women delegates to unseat the Klan-dominated Mississippi delegation were not supported and the Klan was allowed to participate fully in the Convention. The delegates, and PFOC, accepted the liberal, free speech terms which bourgeois democracy sets up for political struggle. Under the guise of civil liberties, these terms support existing power relations and in this case legitimize the most vicious white supremacy.

Our analysis took some expressions of progressive anti-racist movement among white women and made them into examples of international solidarity. We identified contradictions between different resolutions that the Convention endorsed, but didn't correctly analyze the roots of these contradictions. We essentially supported the liberal "you scratch my back, I'll scratch yours" terms of solidarity being expressed at IWY without really defining the dangers which this approach contained. The main basis on which support was given to Third World women's demands at the Conference was a recognition that different groups of women suffered more oppression than others and needed to be supported in their struggles against these more severe forms of oppression. Solidarity was boiled down to a question of women supporting other women. Support on this basis separates colonized women off from the struggles of their whole peoples, collaborating with imperialism's strategy to destroy the unity of oppressed nations. This



The IWY Convention tied women's 'equality' to the imperialist strategy for 'peace' and 'development.'

approach places the struggles of oppressor nation women at the center and moves out to give support to others from there. Genuine international solidarity cannot be built on a sense of sisterhood with colonized women. It must come from an understanding of the nature of colonialism and national oppression. It must be based on supporting the right of colonized nations to self-determination. It must come with the consciousness that the national liberation movements are leading the destruction of the imperialist system and the struggle to liberate women.

Our emphasis on the so-called victories for women's solidarity at IWY, particularly the support given to lesbian and gay rights, was based on an assumption that breaking down male supremacist divisions among women almost automatically opens the way for the development of solidarity with national liberation.

Imperialism erects many competitive divisions between women to maintain women's oppression. Destroying those divisions and building solidarity relations among women can provide women with a different collective basis for developing political consciousness and political struggle. But solidarity among white women by itself does not produce internationalist consciousness. In fact, within the white women's movement and the lesbian movement solidarity,

support, sisterhood have often become ends in themselves and have been used to justify withholding solidarity from the struggles of oppressed nation peoples. Our glorification of "women's solidarity" at the Convention reflects and reinforces this line in the women's movement.

The support given to lesbian and gay rights at the Convention was a progressive step which rejected the right-wing attacks on lesbians being used to divide and control women. However, our emphasis on the gay rights stand at the Convention stemmed from our line that a blow to male supremacy was a blow to white supremacy and that lesbianism represents a key challenge to male supremacy and white supremacy. Lesbianism does challenge an important aspect of male supremacist domination—sexual control over women. But the threat to this particular aspect of male supremacy has not automatically led

lesbians to take up the fight against white supremacy or caused the lesbian movement to move in solidarity with national liberation. Our line wiped out the reality that white lesbians are part of an oppressor nation. This exceptionalization of lesbian women blocked us from taking on the struggle for genuine international solidarity in the lesbian movement. Moreover, we focused on the fight for lesbian and gay liberation as if it were the key struggle to be made in overturning women's oppression. This approach worked against the understanding that women's oppression is institutionalized by the imperialist system as a whole, and it erased the struggles which non-lesbian women make against male supremacy.

PFOC'S STRATEGY FOR THE OPPRESSOR NATION WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

In our last *Breakthrough* article, we criticized our work before the Houston Convention for "underestimating the progressive potential of the women's movement" to fight for national liberation and against white supremacy. This was our initial explanation for why we hadn't struggled harder for international solidarity and anti-imperialist politics. To "compensate" for this error, we wrote an article which extolled "the progressive potential" of the women's movement. Our real error all along lay in not taking on our primary responsibility to struggle for international solidarity in the white women's movement in order to develop its progressive and anti-imperialist potential. What we "underestimated" were the white supremacist blocks to international solidarity among ourselves and in the women's movement. We covered up our own interest in placing the fight against white women's oppression above the fight against national oppression, by saying that fighting women's oppression led to fighting national oppression. We got ourselves off the hook of fighting for genuine international solidarity by saying it existed already.

PFOC began to work around the IW Conference based on our analysis that the escalating attacks on white working class women were part of the state's strategy to maintain control over the oppressor nation working class



Barb/LNS

Sectors of the women's movement have supported Black liberation and other nation liberation struggles, such as this women's contingent of a demonstration in support of the Black Panthers in New Haven in 1968. It's our responsibility to struggle for international solidarity in the women's movement in order to develop its progressive and anti-imperialist potential.

a time of economic and social crisis. (See *Breakthrough* #3-4, "Editorial" and "The Meaning of Miami" for fuller picture.) We saw the attacks on white working class women as a push for them to join in solidarity with oppressed nations to fight imperialism. We defined the choices before white women as aligning with the organized forces of white and male supremacy like the Klan, Phyllis Schlafly and Save Our Children, or fighting against those forces in solidarity with colonized peoples. In effect we were saying that if white women took on the struggle against male supremacist attacks they would move towards solidarity with national liberation.

After the Chicago Hard Times Conference (January '76), PFOC had struggled to overturn a line that attacks on the oppressor nation working class automatically pushed it towards solidarity with oppressed nation struggles. But we ended up defining the attacks on white working class women in just this way. Our analysis separated white working class women from the contradictions of the oppressor nation working class as a whole. It exempted the women's movement from the choices which other oppressor nation social movements have historically faced.

Imperialism is able to give the working classes of oppressor nations material benefits based on the superprofits it obtains from the colonization and superexploitation of the land, labor, and resources of oppressed nations inside and outside of current US borders. Benefits which social movements in the oppressor nation have won have usually been gained at the expense of colonized nations. For example, the labor movement won unions, higher wages and seniority systems by maintaining and enforcing the exclusion of colonized peoples from these benefits.

The women's movement has been no exception to this rule, even though our analysis tried to make it one. Primarily white women have won rights for themselves by organizing at the expense of oppressed nation peoples—women and men. Suffrage was won on the basis of a line that white women needed the vote in order to neutralize the impact of the votes of Black men. Birth control rights have been won through arguments that birth control can be used to

control colonized populations. "Protection" against rape has been won by bringing down police departments and the LEAA against Black men.

Suffrage, birth control and protection against rape are, in and of themselves, legitimate and progressive demands in the struggle against white women's oppression. But the entire structure of the imperialist system is set up to offer solutions to the contradictions of oppressor nation people, including women, at the expense of colonized peoples. The political lines and practice of the white women's movement have accepted and supported these white supremacist solutions.

Mass movements in the oppressor nation do not spontaneously act in solidarity with national liberation. It is the responsibility of those of us in the oppressor nation who are struggling to be internationalists and revolutionaries, to fight to build the conscious understanding within mass movements that national liberation struggles are leading world revolutionary struggle. We must win people to see that movement in the oppressor nation will either develop in solidarity with those struggles or work against revolutionary change. By not struggling for such consciousness at IWY, by reflecting and reinforcing the mass white women's movement terms for the struggle, we followed the well-trod path of white leftists who have betrayed their internationalist responsibility by opportunistically defending oppressor nation interests at the expense of national liberation and world revolution.

POLITICAL AND MATERIAL ROOTS OF OUR ERRORS

The serious errors in our analysis and practice around IWY are part and parcel of errors in our overall line on women's oppression and liberation. They are connected with PFOC's failure in the past to firmly root anti-imperialist politics in an understanding that national liberation movements lead the development of anti-imperialist class struggle in the oppressor nation. In many ways we saw oppressor nation communists as leading the development of international solidarity and anti-imperialist struggle in the oppressor nation working class in isolation from the political leadership which

national liberation movements provide.

This perspective played itself out most sharply in our line on women's liberation. In developing the basic framework of our line on women's oppression two years ago, we were responding to two errors which oppressor nation movements have made in relationship to the question of women's oppression. On the one hand, we were trying to overturn the consistent liquidation of the issue of women's oppression which the white left had made in theory and in practice. On the other hand, we were trying to overturn white supremacist, multinational lines in the white women's movement. However, we didn't recognize that white supremacy was the primary danger, and ended up focusing our efforts on fighting male supremacist lines of the left. We never overturned white supremacist premises which the white women's movement has organized around, which define the oppressor nation women's movement as the leadership of the struggle for women's liberation. We never acknowledged that it has been national liberation movements which have led the development of the revolutionary struggle for women's liberation.

It has been the national liberation move-

ments which have theoretically and in practice brought about the greatest changes in women's lives around the world. National liberation movements have been responsible for demonstrating the centrality of the struggle for women's liberation within revolutionary struggle. They have begun to overturn the material bases for women's oppression in their struggles for independence and socialist revolution. They have challenged the subordination of women in all aspects of society; they have led around collective concepts of childcare; they have exposed and fought against all forms of colonial violence against women; they have transformed the historic disarmament of women with the development of women as revolutionary freedom fighters. They have shown how these changes can only be made in the context of a revolutionary struggle to overthrow imperialism.

By not identifying the leadership of national liberation movements around the struggle for women's liberation, we collaborated with imperialism's efforts to set up white women as the leaders of women's liberation. We developed a line which represented women's liberation as an equal force with national liberation. This was



In fighting for the right to abortion, the white women's movement has repeatedly ignored the struggle against forced sterilization — a tool of genocide against colonized peoples. The "right to choose" has been defined on white women's terms.

crystallized in our use of the slogan, "Fight for national liberation and women's liberation." We set "women's liberation" up as a movement which operated outside of the principal contradiction between oppressor and oppressed nations and outside of class contradictions within the oppressor nation.

Our line represented a worldview rooted in our material reality as white women. As we say in the introduction to the section on women in our political statement (*BT*, Vol. I, No. 1) and in our pamphlet "Women's Liberation and Imperialism": "This deals primarily with what we know most about—the situation and conditions of white women under imperialism." While it is true that this may be what we know most about in an empirical sense, a correct political line cannot be developed on that basis. Starting with white women's experience, we ended up with a line that places the oppressor nation women's movement at the center of political struggle.

Our line on women's oppression starts by analyzing the *common* forms of oppression which all women experience. Then we go on to analyze the "qualitatively different" oppression which oppressed nation women experience.

Although this line was an attempt to combat white supremacist definitions which equalize the oppression of all women, it still starts by analyzing *all* women's oppression. We did not analyze the contradictions in white women's position by understanding their relationship, as part of an oppressor nation, to colonialism and national oppression. Instead, we examined the contradiction between oppressor nation *women* and colonized *women*. This approach separates out colonized women from their whole peoples and places the emphasis on *all* women, not on the division between oppressor and oppressed *nations*. This focus on women also ends up separating off white working class women from the contradictions facing the oppressor nation working class as a whole.

While it is true that there are aspects of women's oppression in oppressor and oppressed nations which have similarities, basing a political line on similarities and differences between women inevitably undercuts an understanding of the fundamental structures of colonialism and national oppression. This line easily leads to a multinational strategy for building women's movement, an approach that plays into imperial-



Here Puerto Rican women and men demonstrate to regulate sterilization abuse. 35% of all Puerto Rican women of childbearing age have been sterilized as part of the US state's program of genocide against Puerto Rican people.

ism's assimilationist strategy and is the opposite of building self-conscious support for national liberation. This line has led to an opportunist strategy which organizes white women around their own oppression, then makes links to the oppression of Third World women and finally makes the links to national liberation; by which time the centrality and unity of the national liberation movements have been completely undercut. If you start organizing against forced sterilization by defining it as an aspect of Third World women's "qualitatively different" oppression, you wipe out the meaning of sterilization as a tool of genocide against colonized peoples. If you try to organize in support of Dessie Woods as a victim of the special oppression of Third World women, you wipe out the meaning of colonial violence as a tool to maintain colonialism for all Black people. If you organize support for Assata Shakur as a Black woman and not as part of a Black liberation movement, you're organizing against the unity of Black liberation which Assata is part of building.

A line which is based on analyzing all women's oppression leads to a strategic definition that a blow against women's oppression is a blow against national oppression. It leads to seeing the fight for the ERA, for abortion, for gay liberation as objectively anti-imperialist even if these struggles are not being waged in conscious solidarity with national liberation.

Our approach supported the terms which the white women's movement set for the struggle against women's oppression. It excused us from the difficult responsibility of struggling to transform the spontaneous struggle against women's oppression into conscious movement against imperialism, in solidarity with national liberation.

CONCLUSION

National liberation movements teach that the struggle for women's liberation is a central part of revolutionary anti-imperialist struggle. In the white left, we must try to apply this understanding to the particular conditions of the US oppressor nation, in order to correctly define the relationship of white women to imperialism and to anti-imperialist struggle. The movement of women in the oppressor nation has been a very significant social force in the past ten years. We

can't ignore it, but must develop strategy for building anti-imperialist and internationalist politics within this movement.

Since IWY, there have been more abortion cutbacks, more anti-gay referendums, more organized resistance to the ERA. The mass movements developing in response to these attacks have not been based in solidarity with colonized peoples.

In California hundreds of thousands marched on gay freedom day united against an initiative which Senator John Briggs is sponsoring, which attacks gay schoolworkers. However, these forces are ignoring the other initiative which Briggs got on the ballot—a genocidal expansion of the death penalty. The dominant forces in the gay and lesbian anti-Briggs movement have consciously defined their fight as a single issue, breaking off support for Third World struggles on the grounds that such support might "alienate" the voters they're trying to organize.

The fight against abortion cutbacks has also been building but it has not linked the fight for abortion rights to the fight against genocidal forced sterilization of colonized women, which is being expanded as a result of the abortion cutbacks. Planned Parenthood is still allowed to speak for the abortion movement even though it propagandizes on the basis that abortion cutbacks will bring about "soaring welfare costs because there'll also be more children." Its genocidal role, implementing population control programs around the world, is not challenged by the women's movement.

It is our responsibility as oppressor nation anti-imperialists and communists to figure out how to change the terms of these struggles, how to win white women to join the struggle against imperialism on the side of national liberation. In the past period, we in PFOC have learned that we cannot demand something from the mass movements that we don't demand of ourselves. The only way we can make a clear struggle for anti-imperialist consciousness and an understanding of the leading role of national liberation is if we base *our* political line on that understanding. Instead of claiming victories which don't exist, we must fight to win support for the real victories which are being won by the armed forces of national liberation, victories which are leading the destruction of the imperialist system. □

THE LONGEST WALK

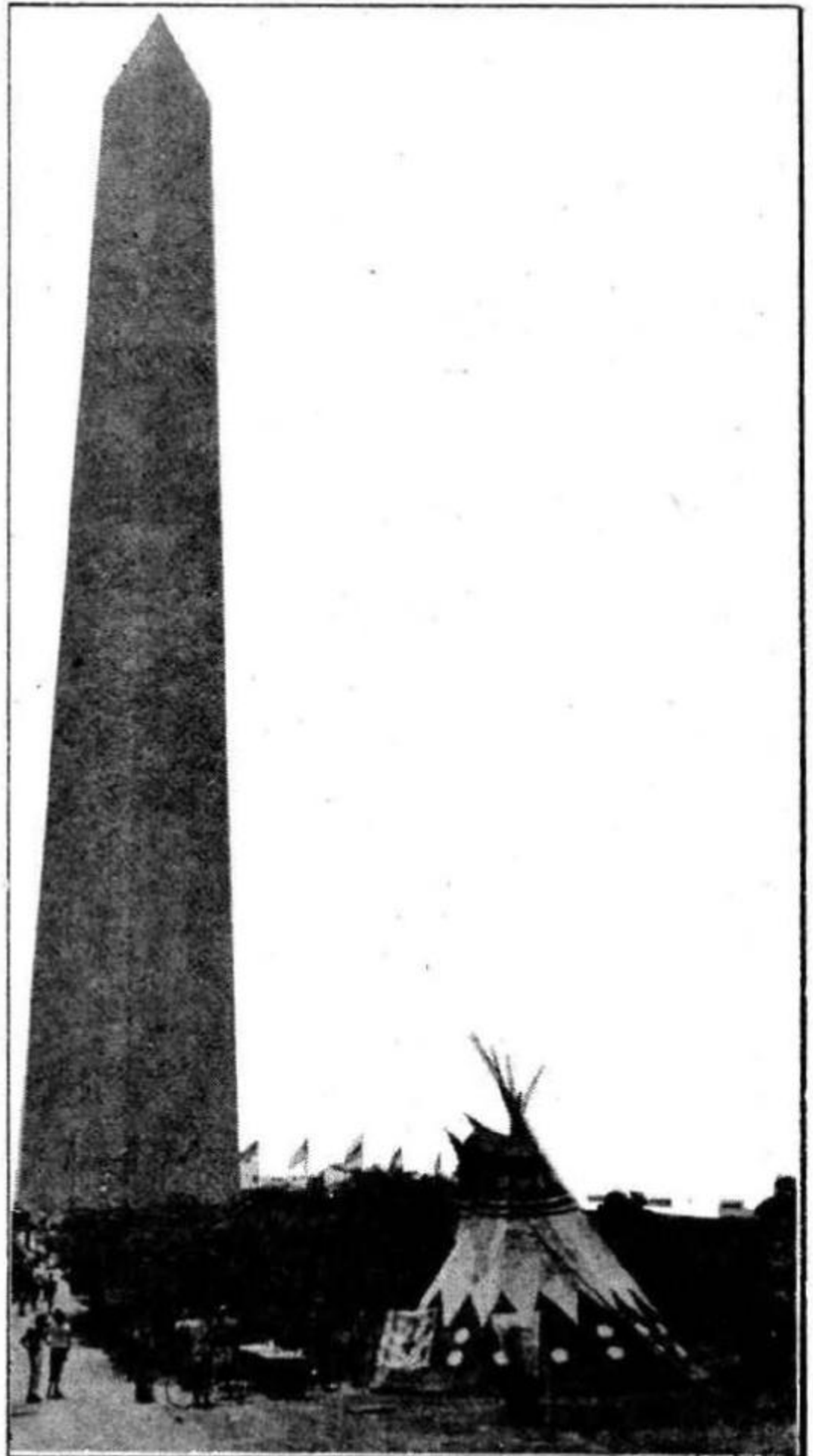
INTRODUCTION

On July 15, 1978 over 3,000 Indian people and supporters marched into Washington, D.C. Spiritual leaders and elders of over eighty Indian Nations headed the march, bearing the pipe sacred to Native religion. The Longest Walk began February 11 at Alcatraz Island in California. This journey from west to east was a spiritual push back against the conquering white nation which had forced Native peoples westward a century ago. It was a reassertion of the traditional spiritual message which guides the lives of the Native Nations of North America: harmony with Mother Earth, with all living beings; cooperation rather than exploitation and brutal oppression.

The main focus of the 3,000-mile walk to the US capital was a protest against eleven pieces of anti-Indian legislation currently in congress. These bills would break all treaties between the US government and sovereign Native Nations, and abolish tribal jurisdiction over Indian lands. The US government has never honored the more than 300 treaties it has signed with the indigenous Nations of North America, although these international treaties are supposedly part of the "supreme law of the land." Now, through a congressional bill, the so-called Native American Equal Opportunity Act (HR 9054), the US government seeks to "legalize," with a stroke of the pen, its historic refusal to recognize Native sovereignty.

A number of the other bills are aimed at specific Nations of Indian peoples in Maine, New York, Washington and Oregon, extinguishing land and water titles held by those Nations. This is a genocidal move: the passage of these bills would open the door for the state to attack as criminals any Native people who tried to enforce the hunting and fishing rights which have been theirs for centuries, and on which they depend for survival. Native peoples' connection to their traditional lands is fundamental to their chosen way of life.

The Longest Walk is part of the 400-year history of Indian resistance to the genocidal war the US government and white settlers have



Akwesasne Notes

waged against Native people. It is a bitter reminder of the Trail of Tears of the Cherokees in 1838, the Long Walk of the Navajos in 1864, the Cheyenne in the 1880's. In these and many other forced migrations, entire Native Nations were uprooted from their ancestral homelands and marched westward at gunpoint to barren "reservation" lands, as the US oppressor nation expanded.

The current bills pending in congress show that this land-grab, this attempt to wipe out Native peoples, continues today. But the Native struggle for sovereignty is growing stronger. Recently, at Point Concepcion near Santa Barbara, the Chumash people established a spiritual encampment to preserve "The Western Gate,"—sacred Chumash burial grounds. Here, according to the spiritual tradition of many Native peoples, the souls of Indian people pass on their way in and out of this world. The Chumash are supported by the American Indian Movement, The Longest Walk, the Native American Defense Committee and other Indian groups. They are fighting a ruling by the California Public Utilities Commission to allow the construction of a terminal to distribute highly explosive liquified natural gas at Point Concepcion. The Chumash see the destruction of the Western Gate as the ultimate extension of genocide, the most extreme form of westward expansion. They feel they must take a stand in California; and they intend to stay and to prevent any illegal attempt at seizure of their sacred lands.

The Longest Walk has also raised the issue of Native American political prisoners and Prisoners of War. Those on the Walk stopped at several prisons to show support for Native prisoners who have been framed and incarcerated because of their active resistance to the genocidal

US war against Native peoples, and for their defense of Indian sovereignty. Spiritual leaders visited Leonard Peltier in Marion Federal Penitentiary and Herb Powless in Terre Haute, Indiana. The Walk held rallies and spiritual ceremonies to remember all the warriors who are now in US prisons.

The struggle to free Native prisoners exposes the viciousness of the government's COINTEL-PRO-type plan to smash the Indian movement by destroying its leadership. Victories like the recent acquittal and release of Paul Skyhorse and Richard Mohawk—who had been forced to spend four years in jail on frame-up charges—strengthen the entire Native struggle.

Breakthrough is reprinting letters of support for The Longest Walk from Leonard Peltier and from the Native American Defense Committee. The Longest Walk, and the entire Native struggle for sovereignty and self-determination, cry out in protest against the genocidal war waged against the indigenous peoples of what is now the United States. They protest the conquest of Native lands by an invading European settler colony, and the continuing efforts of the US government to erase this history, to wipe out Native Nations entirely and to pretend that this country rightfully belongs to the white people who stole it and colonized it. The Longest Walk is a spiritual call to the American people to end the plunder of the earth's resources for profit. We must build our solidarity with the struggles of Native Nations and work to defeat all US government maneuvers aimed at their destruction.

SOVEREIGNTY FOR INDIGENOUS NATIONS OF THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE!



April 1978

Greetings Dear Brothers and Sisters,

There are many methods by which one country can and will continue committing acts of genocide, as with the history of the Native American Nations. We have experienced in the past forced marches under the cruelest conditions ever devised by man at that time, not to mention the massacres before and after each long march across country under armed guard of the military establishment.

In more recent times we have experienced the forced sterilization of our women and the continued robbery of our sacred lands; and for those who have dared to stand up against these injustices, legalized terror has been used by the repressive state to suppress our movement from educating the broad masses of Indians and non-Indians alike about the gradual process by which the government seeks to liquidate the Native American peoples of their land, cultural and religious life styles.

The U.S. Government through their representatives has created a number of repressive bills which pose a major threat to the very existence of Indian peoples in this country. For example, the HR 9054 (Cunningham): this bill will direct the President of the United States to put an end to all treaties between the U.S. and all Indian tribes. This bill with its high sounding phrases of equality claims to put all Native Americans on an equal par under the law with any other citizen of the U.S. But of course we all know that history speaks louder than words, that the actions of the U.S. Government in the past have been meaningless and are no different today under this so-called "Native American Equal Opportunity Act." The Native American National Question cannot be resolved this easily and as a matter of fact, if this bill is passed, it takes an opposite form of not to resolve the question by liquidating and dispersing the concentration of Indian people from their sacred lands, forcing them to migrate into the urban cities as was done with the Chicano people from the Southwest and the Black people from the black belt areas of the deep south. This bill simply means that we will no longer be recognized as a people in this country.

One other anti-Indian piece of legislation is the HR 9950 (Meeds) among many others now before the House of Representatives. In this bill tribal governmental civil jurisdiction of hunting and fishing rights is rescinded in that Indian tribal governments have no jurisdiction outside and within Indian country but only jurisdiction over tribal members. Criminal jurisdiction will also be altered by this bill granting federal jurisdiction of all major crimes and granting the state jurisdiction over lesser crimes. This bill like many of the others will give the green light for the federal and the state repressive arm (the police) to step in and further undermine the few rights we have managed to hold on to and to further destroy any legal opposition to similar bills leading to the major bill, the HR 9054 (Cunningham).

Many of us have committed our lives and freedom to the struggle for sovereignty and self-determination, and we resist by any means necessary any opposition to this end, even at the high cost of being murdered or locked away in prison for life. In the process we must also understand that political repression will come in many ways and forms. Accordingly we must find new ways and means to close our ranks as a people and to embrace not only our struggle but all struggles nationally and internationally, in particular the struggles of the Third World people and countries.

Under the leadership and wisdom of our chief and elders we are taught to keep our fight as peaceful as possible. On February 11, 1978, the Indian Nations across the U.S. have organized and have started a protest which is rapidly becoming known as the "LONGEST WALK." Many Indian people and non-Indian comrades have committed themselves to walk the distance from Alcatraz to Washington, D.C. Realizing the hardships that will undoubtedly arise from this march by bad weather, illness, injuries and attacks by racist police along the way, yet all of you still have this much dedication and devotion to continue to save our land and our children's future. I cannot but respect and admire this kind of strength which unquestionably can only come from strong hearted and determined people. I give my strongest solidarity and support and pray that no harm will fall upon you. I'm also requesting from all my supporters to support this protest and encourage you to walk with the walkers if you are free to do so, even if it's only part of the way or when they are close to their destination of Washington, D.C.

My only sadness is that I cannot be there to walk with you, but I am with you in spirit every step of the way.

In the spirit of Crazy Horse, Your Brother
P.O.W. Gwarth-ee-lass

Leonard Peltier





Akwesasne Notes

GREETINGS:

The people of the Native American Defense Committee send their well wishes, love and prayers to the brave and courageous warriors men, women and children of the Longest Walk. When the defeat of the Cunningham Bill H.R. 9054, the Meeds Bill—H.R. 9950 and others are certain. Then another chapter in the Indian struggle will have come to close. The overall struggle of liberation for our people, however, continues.

When *The Longest Walk* left Alcatraz Island on February 11, 1978, it brought back many memories for us, for it was on Alcatraz many of our Indian people felt the struggle of our people was revived. Soon followed the occupation of Ft. Lawton, (1970), the Bureau of Indian Affairs confrontation (1972), during which a 20 point position paper was presented at Wounded Knee (1973), the strongest and most important, brought about political consciousness among our people. The struggle also, has taken away many of our people, such as Anna Mae Aquash, Richard Oakes, Frank Clearwater, Buddy Lamont, Pedro Bissonette, Joe Kills Right Stuntz, and many others.

When mass arrests instigated by the Justice Department and carried out by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and other law enforcement agencies across the country, for the first time through experience many people became aware of the mass railroad attempts on Indian people, whether innocent, political or otherwise. Leonard Peltier, a warrior for treaty rights, sovereignty and self-determination, is still in Federal Prison, serving two life sentences at Marion Illinois. We urge that people unite with Leonard Peltier, *freedom for Leonard Peltier*.

Faye Roman, of the Choctaw nation, San Jose A.I.M. activist, who is on the walk, was a key figure several years ago in drawing up the basic draft (Legislation) to protect sacred land, burial sites, and holy places, which has since been passed in the State of California. She was also involved in a confrontation and a boycott of the Holiday Inn which sits on a burial site in San Jose, a boycott which has never been lifted. She too along with Jessie Garcia also on the walk could testify of the humiliation of false arrest and railroad attempt at imprisonment.

We urge all out support for Yvonne Wanrow, Dennis Banks, Sid Welsh, Mike Sturdevant, John Hill Decajewiah, and to free all political prisoners.

We of the Native American Defense Committee also urge continuing struggle, and to continue to support one another, and to educate America and the world of the forced sterilization of Native American women, the false arrests, imprisonment, land theft, and the genocide of our people. We say this with thanks, and love for the people of the Longest Walk, for indigenous people everywhere, who are fighting to free the people.

**In Struggle, with peace from the
Native American Defense Committee**

ESTA LUCHA NO SE PARA

An interview with Ricardo Romero Chicano/Mejicano activist from Colorado



In an effort to develop understanding and solidarity with the liberation struggle of the Chicano/Mejicano people, *Breakthrough* is printing an interview conducted last March with Ricardo Romero.

Ricardo Romero is an activist from Colorado who was recently released from jail, where he spent four months after refusing to testify before a federal grand jury investigating the FALN (Fuerzas Armadas de Liberacion Nacional), a clandestine Puerto Rican independence organization. Ricardo's imprisonment, as well as that of Maria Cueto and Pedro Archuleta, two other Chicano/Mejicano activists, is one example of the state's accelerating efforts to suppress the development of the Chicano/Mejicano struggle and the growing unity between Chicano/Mejicano and Puerto Rican peoples.

On May 26 and 27, shortly after this interview was held, the Colorado Committee Against Grand Jury Repression sponsored a National Day of Solidarity with the Chicano/Mejicano liberation struggle. The National Day was a commemoration of fallen fighters of the Chicano/Mejicano movement in Colorado who had been attacked by local police departments and the FBI. In commemorating these people, including Ricardo Falcon and Los Seis de Boulder, the Chicano/Mejicano forces were not mourning their martyrs but were advancing the struggle according to the example their leaders had set.

The presence of many Puerto Rican people at this event demonstrated the close relationship between the Chicano/Mejicano and Puerto Rican struggles. A key aspect of the Colorado Committee's strategy is to put their struggle in a continental context—a part of the struggles of Mexico and all of Latin America against US imperialist domination.

The recent murder of two Puerto Rican

independentistas by FBI-directed colonial police is an example of the common oppression by US imperialism facing the entire continent.

The conquest and settlement of the northern part of Mexico by the US in the 1840's is a relatively recent event in the history of La Raza on this continent. But imperialism tries to represent the current border between the US and Mexico as fixed and eternal to hide the historic and continuous relationship between Chicano/Mejicano struggle within the US and Mejicano struggle in Mexico. However, the relationship is there and it cannot be ignored even by US imperialism. As Ricardo Romero points out in this interview, one impetus behind US state repression of the Chicano/Mejicano movement is the development of crisis and revolutionary upsurge in Mexico itself.

Although the bourgeois media doesn't breathe a word about it, at the present time one and a quarter million Mejicanos who have been driven from their land are living in urban *colonias populares*. These "people's settlements," which exist around a number of major Mexican cities, are developing their own collective structures and economy under Marxist-Leninist leadership. Guerrilla organizations, which the US played a direct military role in suppressing in the 1960's, are building their base in the Mexican countryside. In Matamoros, directly on the US border, the recent police murder of a young Mejicano set off rioting in which the municipal building was burned down and weapons expropriated.

This upsurge doesn't stop at the borders. Demonstrations against the violence of *la migra*, the US Immigration and Naturalization Service, (INS), have taken place on both sides of the border. Militant farmworker strikes have been developing in Arizona and Texas.

The US has responded to this movement with



El Mestizo

Hundreds of thousands of Mejicanos, driven from their land, have organized to defend their *colonias* (settlements) outside Mexican cities, as in this demonstration in Chihuahua last year.

neocolonial schemes like the appointment of Leonel Castillo to head the INS on the one hand, and with stepped-up repression against the Chicano/Mejicano movement on the other. Police murders of Chicano/Mejicano youth are becoming nearly a daily occurrence in the Southwest and California, as the police carry out the role of an occupying army in the tradition begun by the Texas and Arizona Rangers.

This repression is part of the Carter administration's overall strategy for maintaining US imperialism's domination over all of Latin America. One purpose of this interview is to break the media blockade that prevents us in the US from understanding that the liberation of Latin America is being fought for adjacent to and within current US borders. Neither the bourgeois media nor the white left media have represented the reality of these struggles. In the white left, we usually find it easier to focus on Latin American struggles which are farther away, when we pay attention to Latin America at all. The struggle of Chicano/Mejicano peoples explodes the imperialist imposition and definition of borders—a definition which the white left has historically supported.

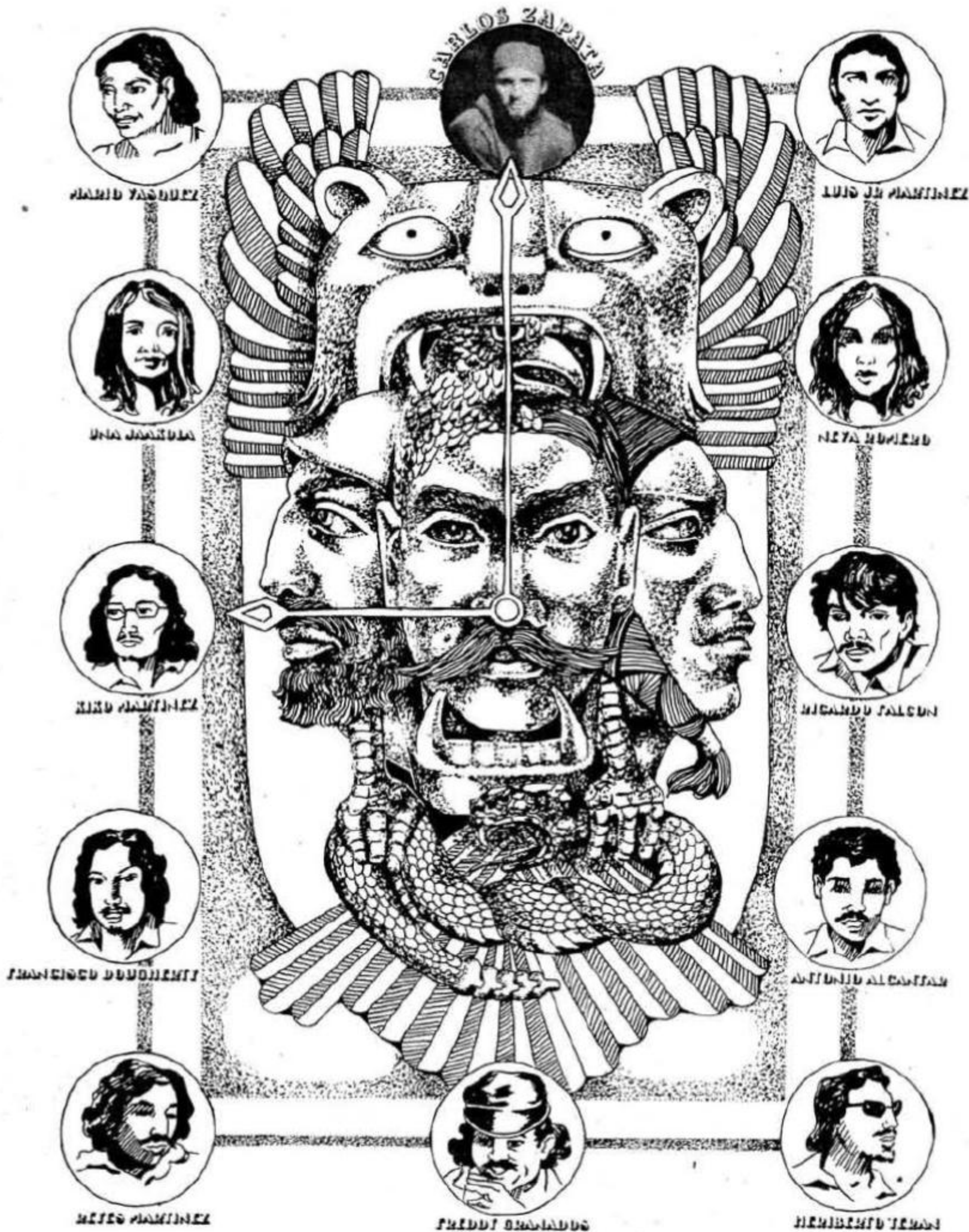
This interview presents the reality of Chicano/Mejicano struggle and the challenge it poses to US imperialism. It defines the terms on which solidarity must be built: unqualified support for the self-determination of Chicano/Mejicano people and for the liberation struggles of all oppressed peoples. It is our responsibility in the oppressor nation left to build active solidarity movement on that basis.

Breakthrough: It seems that the Grand Juries, through their investigation of the Puerto Rican independence movement and its supporters, have also become a repressive weapon against the Chicano/Mejicano people's struggle. Could you tell us about the history of the Chicano/Mejicano people's struggles, particularly in Colorado, in terms of fighting against repression and for liberation?

Ricardo Romero: The history of the Chicano/Mejicano struggle starts in Colorado about 1965-1966 with the founding of the Crusade for Justice with Rodolfo Corky Gonzalez as the director of that organization. We go through a whole period of maybe two years of trying to find a means to identify ourselves as a people, not wanting to be called Spanish-Americans or even Mexican-Americans. So the term Chicano is born, and it is basically a term that was created to identify ourselves; because we could not really relate to the government of the United States, or the United States, or the Mexican government, or we couldn't really relate to Mejiico either at that time.

So in the late '60's and early '70's the Chicano movement was on a definite rise in terms of a lot of things that were happening, different school strikes and community issues, trying to take control of community centers and community parks and trying to have community control of the Chicano people in different barrios of the city. At this time the repression started heightening and things really started coming down. There have been eleven people in the state of Colorado that have been either killed or driven into exile from

Revolucionarios del Movimiento Chicano



let their example shed light to a new level of struggle

Alamazan Comite Against Repression P.O. Box 1073 Alamosa, Colo. 81101 Aztlán

the Chicano/Mejicano struggle.

One of these particular people was Ricardo Falcon, who was a young brother who was organizing in the northern part of the state, doing some really good work around the Fort Lupton-Ault-Greeley area. That particular part of the state was really moving under his leadership. Ricardo was killed on his way to a national La

Raza Unida convention in El Paso, Tejas, in 1972 by a man named Perry Brunson in Oro Grande, Nuevo Mejico, over water for a car. Their car was heating up and they pulled into the station to try to cool it down and an argument ensued over the use of the water for the radiator to cool the car down; and Brunson shot Ricardo—emptied a .38 into his chest and killed him! Brunson, it's

important to note, was a member of the American Independent Party, which was George Wallace's party at that time. Nothing ever came of this. Brunson was completely exonerated.

One of the lawyers in the Falcon case was Kiko Martinez. Kiko was another young, really brilliant Chicano activist attorney, who was a people's lawyer who really did everything for his people and went any place to defend people—to New Mexico, to Texas, Colorado, Nebraska. He was involved when AIM was born in Scotts Bluff, Nebraska. If you remember the riots that took place there in Scotts Bluff, he was there at the time. He was charged in Scotts Bluff by the police there with fire bombing a school. He was really a movement—what you consider a people's—lawyer; a real activist. One day we woke up and the headlines in the Denver papers had his picture. There had been a whole thing that bombs were being set in different restaurants and filling stations, and different places that didn't really make too much sense why bombs would be placed in places like that.

Then, one day we woke up and Kiko's name was on the front page of the paper that he was a suspect of setting, I think, 8 letter bombs and planting other bombs throughout the city. There was a whole hysteria that was created behind that, and I think the fact that he was a Chicano attorney and that he was an activist and that he was a people's lawyer really was the reason for the system to come down on him that way. We feel that Kiko was framed. And so he went underground, nobody knows where Kiko's at, and hopefully he's alright wherever he's at.

Shortly after Kiko Martinez had to go underground, his brother graduated from law school. His name was Reyes Martinez. They were both from Alamosa, Colorado. And I think it's important to note that the case where they had charged Kiko with fire bombing the school in Nebraska; Kenny Padilla, who is another Chicano activist attorney, won that case while Kiko was in exile. They didn't have any kind of evidence, but they were just trying to get him because he was working with the AIM people at that time; and they just tried to frame him. Well his brother graduated from law school shortly after Kiko had to go into exile, and he started to take up and do the same work his brother was doing—taking certain cases across the state and just trying to help out people. Then he was killed in a car explosion (in 1974), along with Neva Romero and

Una Jaakola, at Chataqua Park up in Boulder, Colorado.

About 48 hours after that, three other brothers were killed and one was badly injured in another car explosion up in Boulder. That was Florencio Granados, Heriberto Teran and Francisco Dougherty. Antonio Alcantar lost a leg in that last explosion and survived it. Again, the media tried to say that these people blew themselves up. This was in the lot of a Burger King, and a liquor store is located in that lot. It doesn't make sense that somebody would be trying to assemble a bomb in a place like that, in a lot where there's a lot of people.

And there are some things that took place in 1973. There was an attack by the Denver police on the Crusade for Justice. The Crusade spearheaded a whole unity drive in support of Wounded Knee. About a week before March 17, we had one of the biggest demonstrations in Denver, of solidarity with the Native American people's struggle at Wounded Knee. Probably 1,500 to 2,000 people participated. Four days after the Crusade was attacked. Some young people were having a *mananitas*, that's a party to celebrate somebody's birthday. And the police came in and they had a big shoot-out there. Four policemen were shot; Ernesto Vigil from the Crusade was shot in the back, and Luis Junior Martinez was killed. Mario Vasquez was charged with aggravated assault on police officers, for shooting 3 Denver policemen, and received three 15-year sentences from that incident.

These are the people that we'll be commemorating on May 26 and 27 at the National Day of Solidarity with the Chicano/Mejicano struggle in Boulder that we are going to be hosting. It's really important to note that we have some revolutionary figures that have died struggling for our people. You know, a lot of people don't really realize that. This is just one particular state. Nuevo Mexico has a couple that I can think of right off hand who were Black Berets who were killed by the police; supposedly as they were trying to attempt to steal some dynamite from a construction site. One was Antonio Cordova and the other was Rito Canales, and these brothers were very active.

BT: Do you see a relationship between COINTELPRO, the FBI-led attacks on the liberation struggles, and what came down in Colorado?



BT photo

Grand Jury subpoenees Julio Rosado, Maria Cueto, Jose Lopez, Roberto Caldero, Pedro Archuleta and Ricardo Romero, speaking after their release from jail, in Chataqua Park, scene of the murder of three Chicano/Mejicano activists in 1974.

RR: Definitely. I think it's been a planned, well-timed attack. The people who were killed in Colorado especially. Ricardo was a top organizer out of the northern part of the state. Florencio was the president of UMAS (United Mexican-American Students) up in Boulder, when the struggle was at its highest level in terms of the Chicano student struggle in Colorado. Teran was also part of UMAS Boulder, Neva Romero was part of that. Kiko and Reyes were part of the law students' struggle up at Boulder and they were also from the southern part of the state. They did a lot of organizing in the Valle de San Luis; Alamosa, Antonito, all these little towns were at the peak of struggle under the direction of the Martinez brothers. Junior Martinez was a dance teacher and really a strong organizer in the east side and the north side in Denver and was one of the founders of the Black Beret group in Denver.

So the people they killed were very key, important people in terms of the Chicano movement and the level that it had reached at the particular times we are talking about when these people were killed. So after that, it was a setback for us. The movement kind of came to a stagnation period over the whole fact that a lot of people were scared to move. A lot of people really didn't know if they wanted to get involved, because the repression was so strong—so many people had lost their lives in about a two-and-a-half year period—you know? So it dealt quite a

setback, and this is one of the reasons that we're coming forth and trying to commemorate these brothers and sisters and show to our people and to all people that they are a symbol of resistance of the Chicano/Mejicano people's struggle—and bring them to the forefront of our people's struggle.

BT: Could you explain more about the stance that you and Maria Cueto and Pedro Archuleta took in regard to the Grand Juries? Especially in regard to your relationship with the Puerto Rican national liberation struggle?

RR: Our position was one of complete solidarity with the Puerto Rican independence struggle. By complete solidarity, we meant that we support a complete independence for Puerto Rico. We weren't liberals and we weren't just going to pay lip service to Puerto Rican independence. We supported it by the fact that if they put us in prison, or killed us, or whatever, we still supported Puerto Rican independence; and the government wasn't going to hinder our political beliefs, or our political work by the repressive measures that they were using.

The position that we took was one that we wanted to follow the examples of Ernesto Che Guevara, who was an Argentinian and struggled with the Cuban people. The reason being, that imperialism doesn't recognize borders and frontiers, and has no borders and frontiers. So



then, we as political activists have to start feeling the same way, and not recognizing borders and frontiers, but supporting peoples' national liberation struggles. When they are progressive struggles and they are for the betterment of humanity, they're worth going to jail in support of.

BT: The unity of the Chicano/Mejicano and Puerto Rican peoples raises the whole perspective of a continental struggle of Latin American peoples against US imperialism, which we see on the rise in Nicaragua, Puerto Rico, Argentina, and elsewhere. Could you say something about the current struggle in Mexico and what impact you see it having on the Chicano/Mejicano people's struggle within current US borders?

RR: Well I think as the Mexican revolutionary forces heighten their struggle, the repression has to definitely become much stronger against the Chicano/Mejicano people in the United States. They do not look at us like we're Americans because we live here, you know. They look at us as Mexicans. So if something is heightening in terms of the whole Mexican question, in Mejico with the revolutionary groups, then the repression has to be stronger here at home against us. Because it's pretty obvious there is a Chicano movement here in the United States, and it's obvious that we would support our brothers and sisters struggling in Mejico. So, the government is clear on that and the whole question of solidarity between Puertorriquenos and Chicanos and Mejicanos is a *very* powerful thing, a thing that the government really fears. And the reason

they fear that type of solidarity, and that type of unity, is because it brings together maybe 85 to 90 million people! So that really makes an important, viable political, economic or military force. And they understand that. The people don't really understand that, and aren't really clear about that, but the government is.

So I think our task then is to try to relate this message to all the progressive forces, and that we start to unite in terms of our struggles.

BT: Your Committee in Alamosa has proposed a conference of Chicano and Mejicano people from both sides of the current borders to deal with the national question. Could you explain more about your views on the reunification of Mejico?

RR: What we're calling for, and it's just in the form of a discussion-type of paper, is for the reunification of the Mexican nation: to create the Socialist Republic of Mejico. In calling for that, we feel that we have to have a confederation of revolutionary and progressive forces from Mejico meeting with the progressive Chicano forces from occupied Mejico to start discussion, to start debate, in terms of the whole national question of the Chicano/Mejicano people. We feel that the reason that hasn't been accomplished—that we haven't come up with a national question in terms of our people—is that we can't do one without the other. Mejico, to us, we look at like Vietnam, there's a north and a south to it. It is split up by United States' imperialism. This is why we are calling for a discussion on reunification of the Mexican nation.

We're not saying that's the correct position. The people will show you through your practice what is the correct position. The people will make that decision. This is something we're just proposing at this time, that we at least get together and have discussions, and try and reach a finalization of the national question of the Chicano/Mejicano people.

BT: Historically, Chicana/Mejicana women have played an active role in the liberation struggle, in the Farah, farmworker, and mining strikes, the Grand Jury resistance, and the continuing history of the Mexican revolution. How do you see imperialism coming down on Chicanas and Mejanas, and what role are Chicana and Mejicana women playing in the struggle of your people as a whole?

RR: I think that our women have definitely always played a role. Historically, if you look at the total struggle of our people, women have always been involved and have always been at the forefront of our struggle. There's a whole myth when it comes to Latino people about the whole "macho" concept, that we're really the "male chauvinists," you know; when the real culprits are the corporate structure and imperialism that creates this myth. So that it becomes a very racist thing when people look at us like we're the ones that really oppress women, you know.

In the Mexican revolution there was Adelita, there was Valentina Ramirez, and a lot of women that just participated—took part in the leadership and took part in the day-to-day struggles of them revolutions. Women were always at the forefront of our people's struggle.

I think that we have to look at the present situation, the whole thing of the Grand Jury. Two of our women were the first ones that were attacked by the State. Because of their sexist mentality, you know, they still have this belief that women are weaker than men and that you can subject them to imprisonment and subject them to all these things, and they will break before a man does. I think Maria and Raisa set a hell of an example that the men had to follow after them, you know. That's the kind of leadership that we get from our women. We don't have a whole thing where we're trying to separate our struggle. The men and the women have to work together. I can't give my woman freedom, because I don't have freedom, you know? But

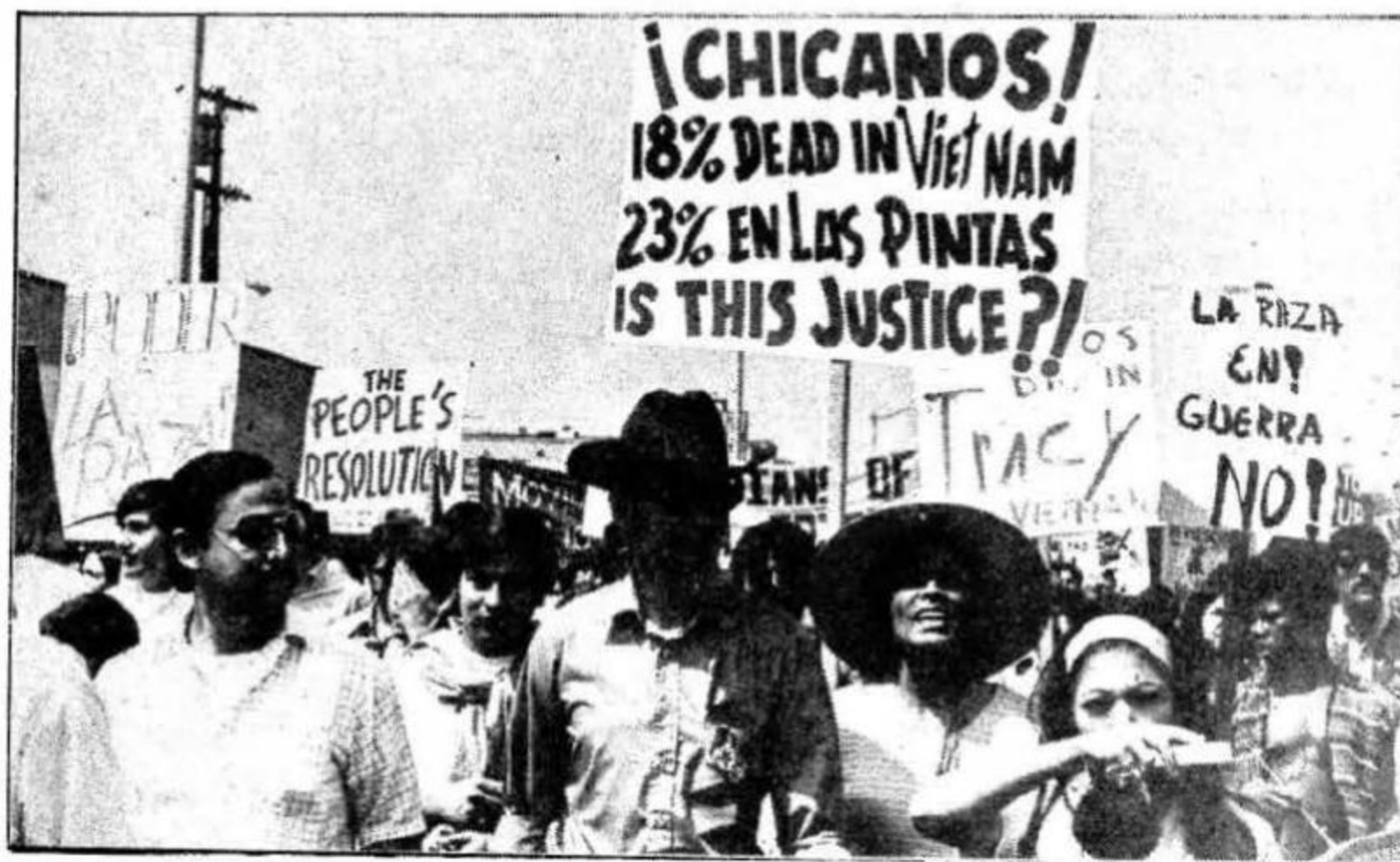


Valentina Ramirez, a leader of the Mexican Revolution of 1910.

together we have to struggle to gain that liberation. We never separate our struggles; they're one and the same.

BT: What is your strategy for fighting the Grand Jury repression, and how do you see the relationship between this issue and other struggles of the Chicano/Mejicano people?

RR: The whole thing of how we can rally together to set up a defense against the abuses of the Grand Jury, against the repression of the Grand Jury, is by organizing people on a national level. That's why we started the National Committee Against Grand Jury Repression. We've had a lot of support from the Bay Area, we've had support from different parts of the country. We started the Alamosa Committee in Colorado. While I was in prison that committee changed the name to the Colorado Committee



450 Years of Chicano History

The Chicano Moratorium of August 1970 emphasized La Raza's unwillingness to participate in the genocidal imperialist war against the Vietnamese people.

because 8 cities in the state had organized behind the whole question of the Grand Jury. I think this is our strength—is organizing people. That's the only strength political activists have, is the support of their people. Without that support they could just literally destroy you anyway they want.

So I think it's important that we set out a broad-based front against the repression of Grand Juries; and have supportive groups all over the United States—people that are willing to support these issues and stand behind the Puerto Rican independence struggle and the Chicano/Mejicano liberation struggle. I think this is what eventually we are going to need to defeat the whole of imperialism; not just one group, but all of us coming together. The Black liberation struggle has been hard hit by the Grand Juries. The Native American people's struggle, particularly AIM, has been dealt some severe blows. The women's movement, the lesbian movement, the gay movement have also been dealt severe blows by the Grand Jury. So it's not just an isolated attack on one of us, but it's on all progressive forces in the United States. The only way we can combine our efforts to make a united front is by organizing against that repression, because that repression is coming down against everybody.

BT: The history of solidarity activities by the North American, oppressor nation left has been very uneven towards the Chicano/Mejicano people, not understanding the significance of the struggle or respecting and upholding the right to self-determination. What are the particular tasks

and responsibilities of solidarity towards the Chicano/Mejicano liberation struggle that you see as necessary for white people to take up at this time?

RR: Probably one of the main things that I see is, in the past the white progressive forces, leftists, have always tried to make us compete for their support, you know? We don't want that kind of thing. We don't want that kind of support. We want progressive groups to support us because politically we're right—what we are doing is right. I think when you talk about self-determination for the Puerto Rican people to national liberation, then that means you don't dictate to the Puerto Rican struggle, but you support their struggle. You don't dictate to them how they should gain their national liberation. But you support their right to national liberation.

I think this is the whole key with self-determination. If you support that, of a people, then you can't dictate to that particular people what their struggle should be, or how they should wage their struggle. But you support that struggle. I think this has been one of the problems we've faced in the past—of people wanting to dictate to us how we should run, or conduct, our struggle. And I think that's impossible, people can't do that. Either you support it because it's right, and if you don't support it then through your silence you're condoning the actions of the State, which is the real enemy. □

July 4, 1978 —

DESSIE WOODS' FREEDOM IS LONG OVERDUE!

On July 4, 1978, historic mobilizations took place in Plains, Georgia and San Francisco, California. On that day, a major step was taken in building the anti-colonial struggle of African people within current US borders. Many hundreds of people marched and rallied in actions led and organized by the National Committee to Defend Dessie Woods (NCDDW), demanding freedom for Dessie Woods and an end to colonial violence. These demonstrations exposed the mockery of celebrating "Independence Day" when there is no such thing as independence or freedom for African people within current U.S. borders; when African freedom fighters like Assata Shakur, Sundiata Acoli, Ernest Graham and Eugene Allen, Geronimo Pratt and the RNA-11 remain captives within U.S. prisons; when the U.S. is a prison house of colonized nations and peoples.

Dessie Woods and the NCDDW see her situation as a case in point of colonial violence directed against African people. Dessie is a courageous black woman who on June 16, 1975 successfully defended herself and a friend against an armed rape attack by a white man named Ronnie Horne in rural Georgia. Refusing to be raped, Dessie shot and killed her attacker with his own unlicensed gun. For her actions, Dessie Woods is now serving a 22-year sentence in the Georgia Women's Institute of Corrections.

The struggle to free Dessie Woods is part of the 400-year struggle of Black people for national liberation and independence. Work on the case has been led by the NCDDW, a black revolutionary nationalist organization based in Atlanta, Georgia. The NCDDW has stressed that white rape of African women is *colonial violence*, and that the main issue in the case is the illegitimacy of the colonial state apparatus which sanctioned the rape attempt and which tried, convicted and imprisoned Dessie Woods. Horne's rape attack is part of the long history of white people raping, beating, castrating and lynching black people with no fear of state reprisal. For the U.S. state, these crimes are part of a strategy to control and terrorize the colonized black population. This is why no white

man has ever been convicted of raping a black woman in Georgia, while Dessie Woods remains locked down.

The national mobilization of black people and their supporters to Plains, hometown of Jimmy Carter, and the solidarity demonstration in San Francisco, were based on clear anti-colonial, pro-independence politics. These mobilizations represented a sharp threat to the imperialist State, which does not want to see black people organize to win the freedom of Dessie Woods or any other colonial subject. The Plains mobilization was successfully held despite months of intimidation, especially by the FBI and the Georgia State Police, including harassment of African organizers and the targeting of a local black church in Plains for reprisals if it supported the march. Each of these attempts to stop the march was defeated. The Plains march in particular exposed the myth of the "new South" in Carter's own backyard, and demonstrated that the African pro-independence movement is regrouping and on the rise. Through the mobilization, the NCDDW and the black Liberation Movement built unity with significant Puerto Rican and Chicano/Mejicano forces who marched in Plains and San Francisco.

The mobilizations also called forth many white people who marched to free Dessie Woods under the leadership of the NCDDW, in unity with anti-colonial and anti-imperialist politics and in support of African liberation and independence. White participation in the July 4 actions represents a significant step forward in solidarity, and a challenge to the long violent history of white people supporting US empire, and to the white left's opportunist opposition to the black struggle for independence and self-determination.

For white anti-imperialists, these mobilizations must push us to intensify our struggle to build solidarity for the Black Liberation Movement. We must build political and material support for the National Committee to Defend Dessie Woods, and organize an active mass movement of white people demanding —

**"FREE DESSIE WOODS
AND SMASH COLONIAL VIOLENCE!"**

FREE DESSIE WOODS

PLAINS, GEORGIA



JULY

ASH COLONIAL VIOLENCE

RANCISCO, CALIFORNIA



The following is the opening speech at the July 4 San Francisco Solidarity Demonstration given by Aziza Ayoluwa, San Francisco Chapter, African People's Socialist Party.

Uhuru, Comrades, Friends, Sisters and Brothers!

In the names of the July 4th Coalition, the California Coalition to Defend Dessie Woods, the National Committee to Defend Dessie Woods, and the African People's Socialist Party, I salute you, and extend a thousand Freedom Greetings!

My name is Aziza Ayoluwa and I represent the July 4th Movement to free Dessie Woods.

I would like to begin this program by extending my greetings to you who have come forward to support my sister Dessie Woods, and who have united with the general struggle of my people, African people for political Independence from U.S. colonial domination.

I also extend greetings and solidarity to all the Socialist Countries which have successfully freed themselves from the insanity of Capitalism. I greet, in the name of this great body, those countries which have successfully smashed colonialism — places like Cuba, Vietnam, Kampuchea, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Angola, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau.

I greet the people who are presently putting forth fierce resistance against colonialist and neo-colonialist domination — peoples like the Native, Chicano/Mejicano peoples of this country; peoples like the Puerto Ricans, peoples like the Chileans, and Iranians, and the African people of Zaire, Zimbabwe and Azania.

I also extend greetings and solidarity, in the name of this great body, to the heroic comrades within current U.S. borders who now find themselves locked down in the various prisons in this country because of their love for the people and their hatred for colonialist oppression and capitalist exploitation — comrades such as Geronimo Pratt, Assata Shakur, Sundiata Acoli, the Republic of New Africa II, Susan Saxe, the Four Puerto Rican Nationalists, the Grand Jury Resisters, and Leonard Peltier.

Today will mark an historic occasion in the struggle of African people in this country for genuine liberation, against illegitimate and foreign domination — in a word, against colonialism and colonialist violence, and all of us here are a part of this history-making occasion.

Right now hundreds of African people and the supporters of our struggle against US colonialism are marching in Plains, Georgia, raising great contradictions for this government that would criticise other people and other countries for human rights violations. We are in solidarity with that march and rally in Plains, the home town of US president James Earl Carter.

We are in solidarity with the message they will be taking to Plains: that as long as African people in California can be victimized by Proposition 13 or the Briggs Initiative, or the Bakke decision we will not allow Carter and his puppets like Andrew Young, to criticize anyone else for human rights violations.

We are in solidarity with the message that says as long as the Native people, the traditional and genuine owners of this land, are strangers and victims on their own territory, there can be no discussion of human rights by this government.

We are in solidarity with the Plains message which says that as long as the undocumented workers are treated as aliens on stolen land, and the courageous people of Puerto Rico are held as profitable colonial hostages, there can be no discussions of human rights by this government.

Today marks a turning point in the movement in this country. Today we have with us a great number of North American or white people who were capable of coming out in support of the struggles for national liberation from US imperialism within and without US borders. We salute you for the giant step you have taken.

Comrades, friends, sisters and brothers, — On with the program. Forward to Plains!



U.S. COLONIALISM'S TERRORIST SQUADS IN PUERTO RICO: A Last Desperate Attempt to Defeat National Liberation

A Statement by the Movimiento de Liberacion Nacional

INTRODUCTION

On July 25, 1978, Puerto Rican colonial police under the direction of the FBI ambushed and killed two young Puerto Rican independentistas. This intensification of repression against the Puerto Rican national liberation struggle occurred on the 80th anniversary of the U.S. invasion and occupation of Puerto Rico.

Breakthrough is reprinting a statement by the Movimiento de Liberacion Nacional (MLN) on the escalating struggle in Puerto Rico. It was presented at demonstrations to protest the killings and support Puerto Rican independence, held simultaneously on August 11th in New York, Chicago, Denver and San Francisco.

The U.S. repression is directed at the advances made by the Puerto Rican liberation struggle in the past year. These advances include the militance of recent labor struggles, the actions against the U.S. Navy by the fishing people of Vieques, and the developing clandestine and armed struggle, such as the killing of CIA agent Alan Randall. The killings in Puerto Rico were followed by arrests of a number of independentistas, and the filing of ten-year-old federal weapons charges against Dona Consuela Lee de Corretjer, a long-standing independence leader and wife of the Secretary General of the Liga Socialista of Puerto Rico. These actions indicate the continued FBI COINTELPRO-type operations directed against the Puerto Rican independence movement. These attacks are aimed at isolating and smashing revolutionary liberation forces. So-called solidarity forces who have condemned all armed actions for Puerto Rican independence and liberation as "terrorist" have played right into this state strategy.

Another COINTELPRO operation against the

Puerto Rican movement is the recent bomb-injury and arrest of William Morales, who was once a member of the National Commission on Hispanic Affairs (NCHA) of the Episcopal Church. The FBI has framed and set up Morales on charges of possession of explosives, and transportation of explosives across state lines. Morales was tricked into going to an apartment in Queens where he was then "found" by the police, the victim of an explosion in which he lost 3½ fingers on each hand. The FBI is waging a media campaign in which it has accused Morales of being a member of the FALN (Fuerzas Armadas de Liberacion Nacional Puertorriquenas). The COINTELPRO project is trying to reinforce their fabrications of connections between the NCHA and the FALN. This has been used as a pretext for wide-ranging attacks on the Puerto Rican and Chicano/Mejicano communities and movements by Grand Juries in New York and Chicago.

This wave of repression against the growing Puerto Rican liberation struggle marks an intensification of this life-and-death struggle of the Puerto Rican people for their liberation and for their very survival as a nation. The heroic struggle for Puerto Rican independence and socialism, as well as the intensity of U.S. colonial domination and repression, demand that white North Americans take up an active and committed solidarity with the Puerto Rican people. We must be prepared to respond to and unite with the leading politics and strategies of the revolutionary Puerto Rican independence forces. We need to develop a broad and active movement among white North American people in order to impede the strategies of the U.S., and to fight for the independence of Puerto Rico. The liberation of Puerto Rico will be a critical blow to U.S. imperialism.

The murder of Arnaldo Dario Rosado and Carlos Soto Arrivi in Cerro Maravilla in Villalba confirms, beyond any doubt, that the U.S. government can now count with a domestic Puerto Rican force of police terrorists to carry out executions of Puerto Rican Nationalist Liberation fighters. The tactics that the Central Intelligence Agency perfected in Viet Nam, and used extensively in Latin America to destabilize and liquidate key sectors of guerrilla organizations, have now become part of a program against the independence forces in Puerto Rico.

In recent years, those statehood terrorist squads bombed more than 250 targets in Puerto Rico. All of the targets were the homes, property, and meeting places of the independence and labor movements. In 1974, the pro-statehood terrorist squads have become police terrorist squads under the order of the colonial justice department, whose *Negociado de Investigaciones Criminales* (NIC), have been identified in the Puerto Rican press as the cover for the police terrorist squad, a specialized branch trained by the U.S. *Federal Bureau of Investigation* (FBI), and which uses the torture and murder method developed by the Central Intelligence Agency.

This squad, which was exposed fully in the torture and murder of Puerto Rican labor leader Juan Caballero's death in 1977, operates a series of clandestine houses in isolated areas of Puerto Rico, where their prisoners are taken and interrogated. In Caballero's case, their task was to force him to talk about the execution of the C.I.A. agent Alan Randall by a commando squad of the Puerto Rican National Liberation forces, hours before the agent was due to start a seminar on the terror tactics to be used against the labor movement of Puerto Rico.



Carlos Soto Arrivi



Arnaldo Dario Rosado

Caballero was first wired about the neck, arms and legs in such a manner as to force him to choke himself whenever he moved. The movement of his body was provoked by continuous beatings administered to him about the body. These were the very same interrogation methods that the CIA used in Viet Nam against the prisoners of war. This was the way that Caballero was killed. His body was found later, by the same police torturers in the gully, down the slope of El Yunque, the impressive rain forest in eastern Puerto Rico.

The murder of Rosado and Soto has been named clear beyond a doubt. This is what has led the diverse social and political, as well as legal sectors of the Puerto Rican class society to condemn the police. Both Rosado and Soto were led by police undercover agent Alejandro Gonzalez Malave, posing as a cadre of the Puerto Rican Socialist Party (PSP), whose ranks he had infiltrated in 1974, into an ambush, which became an execution.

According to taxi driver, Julio Ortiz Molina, whose car had been commandeered by the three men, once in Cerro Maravilla, the two murdered men got out of the car with the agent behind them. Police appeared armed with automatic weapons, and the agent shouted; "Don't shoot, I'm a police agent." Either Soto or Rosado then shouted, "I surrender." But police opened fire, wounding the police agent and killing Rosado and Soto. More than 15 bullets struck the bodies of each man.



Demonstration to protest killing of two Independentistas.

No sooner was this police act of terror completed than the colonial governor of Puerto Rico told the press that the patriotic fighters for independence could expect to be dealt with in time, should they defy his administration. The colonial Popular Democratic Party denounced his statement as an invitation to civil war in Puerto Rico. And this is the essence of what happened, and what is expected to continue to happen in Puerto Rico in this period of struggle.

It is clear to us that as colonialism enters its final period in Puerto Rico that the statehood strategy is to repress and destroy the most progressive and revolutionary elements of the Puerto Rican liberation struggle in order to deprive us of an offensive capability and neutralize the revolutionary options. To achieve this would leave the independence forces in a harmless state of parliamentary protest within a colonial structure, in which we cannot win, and within which the U.S. ruling class would find the statehood formula acceptable.

This is the only option for statehood, a formula which the masses of Puerto Rican people abhor as a solution to the status issue. And this option has to be played on because the characters involved in the leadership of the statehood movement today represent the most reactionary gorilla elements in our entire history, and they are in power; in the legislature, in the police, and in the office of the colonial government. They also control the National Guard in Puerto Rico, and they have powerful allies in the U.S. armed forces, FBI, CIA, and prominent sectors of U.S. capital.

But the Troglodyte (strong-arm) strategy will not work as we enter this last period of struggle against colonialism and for independence and sovereignty, the Puerto Rican independence movement counts on powerful international support, and a numerous and decided sector of patriots capable and willing to fight to defeat reaction and colonialism. And this means that attacks such as these launched by the fascists of the statehood movement under the orders of the FBI and the U.S. government will meet with the punishment that the organized and rational anger of the Puerto Rican patriotic forces will execute. But it will not be done on the timetable of the enemy of Puerto Rican independence, nor in accordance with their plans to provoke spontaneous manifestations and activities. It will come in time with the needs and program of the Puerto Rican national liberation struggle.

This is a lesson for us all in the tyrants' murder of Rosado and Soto. And this lesson is that the forces of independence must be organized around the reality of struggle and repression which this present time period imposes to it. Those who do not heed the sign of the time will not survive to wage struggle. Those who survive to wage struggle will see, possibly within the next decade, but certainly before the present century ends, the long fought for independence of our homeland, and the dawning of an age in which colonialism will pass into history as an abhorrent form of tyranny, alongside slavery and feudalism. □

LA PATRIA ES VALOR Y SACRIFICIO

FREE GERONIMO!

Elmer "Geronimo" Pratt is an imprisoned Black freedom fighter who is currently serving a life sentence at San Quentin on a frame-up murder conviction.

Geronimo was a leader of the Black Panther Party in Los Angeles during the time when the BPP was under violent attack across the country by the FBI's counter-intelligence program—COINTELPRO. The incredible history behind Geronimo's case can only be understood as part of COINTELPRO's war strategy which was designed to crush the Black liberation movement and its leaders.

In the 1960's the LA Black Panther Party grew quickly in a city long known for the brutality and lawlessness of the police in the Black and Brown communities. As a leader of the LA Panther chapter, and a member of the Party Central Committee, Geronimo Pratt led many Panther programs and activities which directed Black rage from the type of spontaneous resistance of the Watts rebellion to sharper, more organized methods of struggle. Geronimo understood well the need for organized resistance as a condition for victory.

The state and FBI recognized the explosive effects of Panther organizing and set out to smash

the Panthers. On December 18, 1969, just a few days after Chicago police had murdered Fred Hampton and Mark Clark in a dawn raid, the LA Police Department launched a major military attack on the LA Panther headquarters. This raid was meant to be a final assault, but the Panthers successfully held off the police until community members arrived and forced an end to the firing of weapons. This successful defense prevented more murders like those of Fred Hampton and Mark Clark.

Despite the fact that he was not present at Panther Headquarters that morning, Geronimo, along with other Panthers, was brought to trial on a wide range of charges stemming from the self-defense against the police attack. After lengthy courtroom proceedings, Geronimo was acquitted of all charges except the minor "compromise" ones. Unable to stop him "legally" the government then intensified its harassment of him through continuous false arrests. He was even arrested once for the Manson murders.

After numerous assassination attempts on his life Geronimo jumped bail and became a "fugitive." In September of 1970, he was captured in Texas, and then extradited to



The Watts rebellion in Los Angeles, August 1965, marked the increasing militance of resistance by Black people against their colonial oppression.



BPINS

The LA BPP office after members successfully defended themselves from a murderous police attack. Geronimo, who was not even present at the office, was falsely charged with participating.

California and locked up in isolation. Two years later—in 1972—he was charged with the murder of a white tennis player in Santa Monica, California which had occurred in 1968. He was convicted and sentenced to life in prison. COINTELPRO was clearly at work. During the 1972 trial, the chief witness for the prosecution was an admitted police informer against the Black movement. He claimed that he had once overheard Geronimo admit the murder a year after it had taken place. A survivor of the “tennis court” incident identified Geronimo as the assailant during the trial, contradicting his numerous earlier statements that the attackers were tall, dark-complexioned Black youths. Geronimo is only 5’6” tall and has light skin.

Furthermore, the state has documented evidence that at the time of the murder Geronimo was present at a Black Panther Party Central Committee meeting in Oakland, California, 400 miles from LA. Geronimo and his legal team sought to prove government knowledge of this meeting by demanding that FBI surveillance records of Geronimo and the Panthers be of public record. The government, while admitting

the existence of this surveillance, claimed it had no record of Geronimo’s activities until two weeks after the day of the murder, despite the fact that surveillance against other LA Panther members had been proven to have been going on all during 1968.

It is this frame-up that has kept Geronimo in prison the last eight years. During this time, he has continuously worked with his defense team to achieve two major goals: to gain his release from prison by exposing the facts of the frame-up; and to show that COINTELPRO was a program of government terror aimed at destroying the Black liberation movement.

A federal suit filed two years ago against the California Department of Corrections (CDC) recently forced the San Quentin administration to release Geronimo to the mainline—after seven years in isolation. Settlement for damages is still being negotiated. The defense team hopes through this suit to prove CDC collaboration with the FBI. In addition, there will be suits charging violation of Geronimo’s civil rights and suits which will prove illegalities during his trial.

Getting released from isolation is a victory,

EXPOSE COINTELPRO!

but since entering the mainline, Geronimo has received a number of disciplinary write-ups for things like refusing to submit to a dehumanizing rectal search. This harassment is designed to counter the effect of his political leadership among Black prisoners in San Quentin and to provide an excuse to put him back in isolation. Furthermore, there is a serious danger that Geronimo is being set up by the prison administration for an attack by white supremacist prison gangs. Administration collusion with these groups has repeatedly resulted in violence against Black prisoners in the recent past.

There is an urgent need for political and material support around Geronimo's case. The facts of his situation need to receive public

attention. Solidarity work exposing COINTEL-PRO's attacks on revolutionary nationalism is crucial if the government's next assault on these forces, whatever its title, is to be fought effectively.

To help build awareness and support for Geronimo's case, *Breakthrough* is reprinting a press statement issued by his lawyer on May 30, shortly after Geronimo's release from solitary; and a statement written by Geronimo to a defense benefit held in San Francisco on June 17. For more information, and to contribute urgently needed funds, write the Geronimo Pratt Defense Committee, c/o Stuart Hanlon, 294 Page Street, San Francisco, CA 94102, or call (415) 431-4260.

STATEMENT BY GERONIMO

1978 marks another "Election Year" for many Nation-States across the land, and the violent forces behind the gangsters, who vie for political control, are once again churning up us prisoners to be mixed—like groundmeat—into their madness and used to strengthen the "Political Clout" of this or that gang.

In this area, the republicans, headed by the evil younger, seem to be winning with their legalized rip-off (such as Prop. 13, etc.) of the lower classes, and their vicious lies of "Prison Gangs" . . . These castaways from the fiendishly criminal nixon-mitchell regime are leaving no tricks untried in order to regain more control for their fascist-like organizations.

We must understand that koncentration kamps are a very massive instrument that not only can be made to yield huge profit in finance, also it can be used in influencing many votes of an unwary public. Whoever controls this industry of concrete and steel and human flesh controls an awesome amount of power.

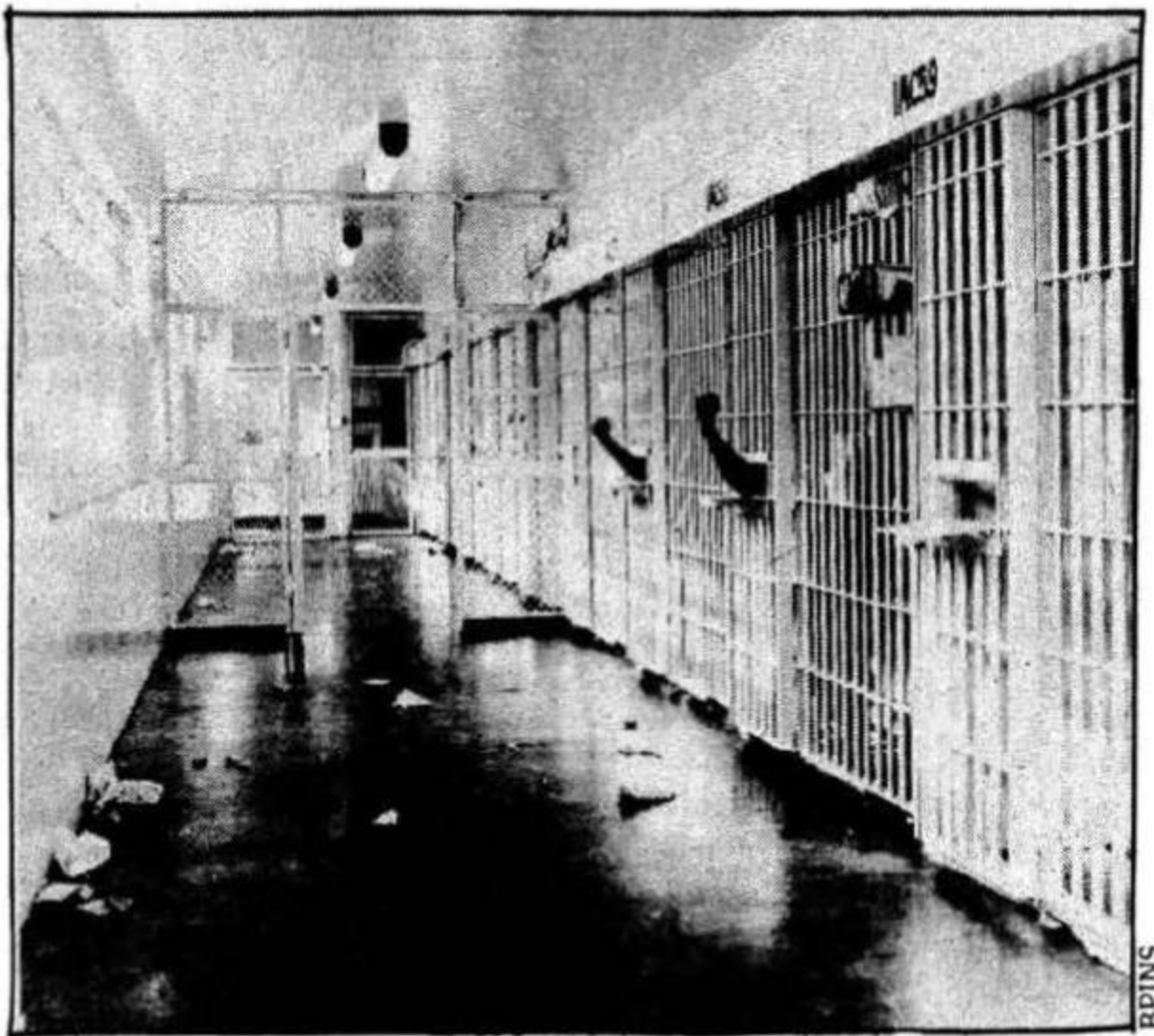
In spite of the so-called, "Rights of Prisoners," Human Rights, etc., the prisoner in amerika is still Legally defined as a slave in the constitution of the united states, of which the 13th Amendment reads that, "Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, EXCEPT AS A PUNISHMENT FOR CRIME WHEREOF THE PARTY SHALL HAVE BEEN DULY CONVICTED, SHALL EXIST WITHIN THE UNITED STATES, OR ANY OTHER PLACE SUBJECT TO THEIR JURISDICTION." This clause was designed to give the former slaveowners the new yankee-doodle game on how to do the nigga in and still appear humane in the eyes of the world. Thus "Black Codes" were established to legally entrap our ancestors by DULY arresting, DULY convicting them, and DULY placing them back into an even worsen kind of slavery called "Peonage." . . . Today, the same/similar vicious circle twists like tornados behind the "Black Militant Codes," but with more deadly results.

Here in these kalif. koncentration kamps (KKK) we are constantly reminded of our "Slave Status" in the worst ways, and just as the slavemaster of yesterday manipulated the lives and destinies of our ancestors, so today we have essentially the same thing being played upon us be the heirs and descendents of ol massa.

There are numerous examples of slaves being played off against each other throughout history. Today in these kamps the same deadly trend is being continued against us, but in more sophisticated ways, in order that the youngers can demand more prisons, more guards, more MONEY and more control over our lives and the peanut bandit carter (his klan stole it from George Washington Carver) gets away with his

hypocritical call for human rights!!! At the same time, a large and significant bulk of Third World Warriors are kept in this mad maze of kamps while our people are further exploited and colonized throughout the land. The chains of the field nigga are never loosened, rather they are tightened more and more till the agony brings on death. Our cries for Human Rights and Justice are smothered by the louder proclamations of the grinning new plantation owners/controllers who so shamelessly speak of human rights, trying to portray the human rights problem as some isolated and abstract problem which exists only abroad. And the American People are conned to look toward the atrocities in prison situations throughout the Third World and beyond these borders, and fail to see the inter-connections, inner-relations, and similarities, in that when a victory or defeat is achieved by our kin in Zimbabwe or Azania, and elsewhere, that we also share in that victory or defeat for we realize that our repression is but part of the *same* repression inflicted upon them by the *same* worldwide network of imperialist domination.

The "Prison Struggle" is but a small part of our overall struggle for liberation, yet it is an extremely significant area of struggle, especially in the aftermath of the nixon-hoover experience and the present realities of their ongoing COINTELPRO type schemes which are responsible for virtually every murder,



San Quentin Adjustment Center (AC)

exile, imprisonment, and harassment of Black and Third World Revolutionaries for the past 15 years. With such a large number of our prime liberation fighters re-located in these various P.O.W. Kamps, it has become vital for the preservation of our centuries old struggle, that sufficient energy and effort is put into ways and means for actual release of our soldiers from these places. "Free Assata" should be transformed from a mere slogan to actual reality, as it must be with every prisoner of this war—this constant state of violent war that has been waged against us since the first days of slavery. So the prison Struggle continues without respite, having been largely driven underground (not destroyed) after Comrade George and the Attica Rebellion of 1971, while the keenly Fascist COINTELPRO-type edge cuts like giant straight razors into any semblance of prisoner solidarity, and the government justifies its murderous and anti-human acts behind the ugly picture of "Prison Gangs," and such... Thus the picture is drawn of the big white game-hunter slaying the king of the jungle even though everyone knows that the lion cannot paint pictures... But if they could, the difference would be as distinctly remote as San Quentin and San Clemente...

So the call for unification is being sounded from every corner...with the voices of Prisoner solidarity being toned by the Brilliant Tony (Jalil) Bottom and Sundiata Acoli; heed this call...of Afeni Shakur in the arduous and meaningful efforts for effective legal action against the government's vicious COINTELPRO campaigns of terror and destruction...Heed the call of the United Nations in the clear resolution condemning colonialism in all its wicked forms as an international crime...follow in the courageous example of Dessie X Woods and Joan Little in preventing this continued rape of our people and say,

"You on whom the blows are falling,
Hear your wounded Sistas/Brothas calling,
Weakness gives us strength to lend you,
Comrade come We shall avenge you!!!"

Pamberi Ne Chimurenga
Geronimo
June 17, 1978

**FORMER BLACK PANTHER LEADER RELEASED FROM SOLITARY PRISON CONFINEMENT
WHEN LAWYERS SUE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
Prison offers to settle out of court for "Geronimo" Pratt**

Press Statement of May 30, 1978

After 7 years in solitary confinement, Elmer "Geronimo" Pratt was unexpectedly released to the mainline of San Quentin Prison when his lawyers began taking depositions of prison officials in a civil rights suit against the Department of Corrections charging them with confining Pratt in isolation, violating his Constitutional rights.

The prison authorities offered to settle the suit and as part of that settlement moved Pratt to mainline for the first time in 7 years. The case is still not settled because the prison officials and Pratt have yet to agree on the amount of damages Pratt is to receive for his years of illegal confinement.

"It's obvious that the only reason they've kept Geronimo locked up all these years is because of his political beliefs and associations. They've accused him of several incidents that have all been proved false or trivial, yet they kept these incidents on his prison record to create the image of Pratt as a man too dangerous to be with other prisoners. They are afraid of his politics and therefore decided to lock him up," said Stuart Hanlon, legal counsel for Pratt.

"I am glad in a sense to be out of isolation so that I can have more time and energy to fight my conviction. But their lies still follow me at San Quentin, and I can never be happy while locked up in any prison, while I stand falsely convicted, and while my brothers remain caged like animals in segregation," said Geronimo.

"We cannot be grateful for the prison officials doing what they should have done years ago. It is outrageous that a man like Geronimo is locked up for years because he is a strong black leader who fights and speaks for the rights of blacks both inside and outside of prison," said Carol Rodiut, a spokesperson for BWPA (Black Women for Political Action).

The suit, filed in U.S. Federal District Court, points to many instances where Pratt was falsely accused because of who he is, and not because of what he has done:

- the Department of Corrections said he caused racial disturbances while in the L.A. County Jail in 1971; yet a letter from the L.A. Sheriff in Pratt's file says he helped ease racial conflict while there;
- prison records accuse him of planning to hijack a school bus while in the hole at Folsom Prison. This charge was used as an excuse to lock him up for two years, and then the Department of Corrections admitted there was no evidence to support the charge and that it was untrue;
- Pratt was charged by the prison with aiding in an assault on a prison guard in 1975. The Marin District Attorney failed to prosecute him for this for lack of evidence, and the other inmate who was tried was found not guilty at trial. Pratt was at first sentenced by the prison to 10 days in his cell for

Black Panther Intercommunal News Service



Elmer "Geronimo" Pratt

this incident but this sentence was changed by the warden to two years in isolation, even though the prison later admitted Pratt's involvement was trivial and that he was really trying to save the guard from injury;

- Pratt was charged in 1976 by the Marin District Attorney's office for possession of one joint of marijuana, a felony, even though hundreds of other inmates are never criminally charged for possession of drugs such as heroin. When Pratt's attorney filed a 30-page Discovery Motion (charging discriminatory prosecution), the case was immediately dismissed;

- prison records state Pratt is dangerous because he is a leader of the Black Liberation Army, the Symbionese Liberation Army, and other revolutionary groups, even though all these groups were formed after he was locked up in isolation, and there is no evidence linking him to these groups.

"My husband has been locked up for years in a six by nine foot cell, denied decent exercise, the right to further his education, to learn any trades or work, been denied family visits. I'm glad this part is over. But he is not free yet, and is still harassed by the prison. On his second day on mainline, he was accused of organizing a strike and lost his job at the furniture factory," says Ashaki Pratt, wife of Geronimo.

The Warden and other officials of San Quentin have been telling the Department of Corrections' officials in Sacramento for over one year that Pratt should be moved to a mainline, but not the one at San Quentin, because of his notoriety there. The Sacramento officials have been saying no other prison will take him; the irony is that the other prisons don't want Pratt because of the false statements and unfounded accusations that exist in Pratt's file.

Geronimo is attempting to fight his initial conviction—a first degree murder charge in 1968—through the Federal Courts. Pratt's attorneys in New York have filed a Freedom of Information Act suit against the F.B.I. for withholding surveillance records of Pratt. The F.B.I. has already turned over 1600 pages of material on Pratt, much of it deleted and with hundreds of pages withheld. The murder took place on December 18, 1968 in Los Angeles, at which time Pratt was attending a Black Panther Party meeting in Oakland, and the F.B.I. had surveillance of that meeting. The F.B.I. now maintains that they did not begin surveillance of Pratt until January 1, 1969—coincidentally 12 days after the murder.

Geronimo concludes: "This move to mainline is only a first step, and it took two years in Court to get this. They won't even give me minimal damages for all those years I was locked up for nothing. They're still trying to set me up at San Quentin. No victory comes without a fight—and I will continue my fight until I am free." □



BY ANY MEANS NECESSARY

Writings of the Black Liberation Army

The Black Liberation Army (BLA) is a leading revolutionary nationalist organization, a part of the unceasing struggle of the colonized Black nation in the US for self-determination, liberation and independence. The BLA arose out of the history of African resistance to colonial domination and genocide in Africa, aboard slave ships and in the Western hemisphere.

The BLA grew from the massive upheavals and battles of the Black Liberation Movement during the late 1960's and early 1970's. The power of Black revolutionary nationalist consciousness was built on the courage, anger and sacrifice of millions of Black people engaged in an undeclared war with the US empire. US control of colonized Black people has always been maintained through force and official terror: from the prisons which are weapons of national oppression and enslavement, to the occupation armies of police in the Black communities, to the sanctioned racist terror of the lynch mob. In the 60's, the state through the FBI escalated its war against the Black nation with the development of its COINTELPRO program, through which thirty-eight Black leaders were killed in a two year period and hundreds more were imprisoned.

In response to COINTELPRO and the ongoing genocide against Black people, the BLA struggled within the Black Liberation Movement for an understanding that revolutionary violence is essential to winning Black liberation. The BLA built on the politics of national liberation and people's war being developed in Indochina and Africa, arguing that the US empire is also vulnerable from within.

In this context, the Black Liberation Army went beyond the armed self-defense movements of the 1960's and undertook offensive actions directed against the empire's armies and police. On Malcolm X's birthday in 1971, the BLA attacked two New York City cops in front of the home of the New York District Attorney responsible for the trumped-up prosecution of the Panther 21. In August 1971, the BLA opened a country-wide counter-offensive which began in solidarity with the Republic of New Africa, whose leadership was attacked and arrested in Hinds County, Mississippi. Days later, in response to the state's murder of George Jackson, the BLA attempted to fire a 66mm anti-tank gun at the Mission police station in San Francisco, attacked an SFPD patrol car, bombed a San Francisco Bank of America branch, and ambushed the Ingleside police station in San Francisco, killing one cop and wounding others.

The BLA also responded to the state's massacre at Attica, vowing to retaliate against all murders of Black people.

The BLA committed itself to build a clandestine army of warriors capable of attacking the empire at its vulnerable points, developing the capacity of colonized Black people to wage the armed struggle necessary to win independence and self-determination.

The state responded by unleashing genocidal search and destroy missions against suspected BLA members. Police and paramilitary units raided and terrorized Black communities under the guise of searching for "terrorists." Some warriors were gunned down in the street. In May

of 1973, police murdered Zayd Malik Shakur and captured Assata Shakur and Sundiata Acoli.

One of the principal tactics used by the state to back up its terrorist attacks was to move to politically isolate the Black Liberation Army by portraying them as a band of criminals. The BLA was held responsible by police, courts and media for dozens of unsolved crimes. Particular emphasis was placed on accusing them of crimes against Black people in the community. This attempt to divide the BLA from its base of support is no different from the tactics used by the US in Vietnam against the NLF, or in Zimbabwe and South Africa against African freedom fighters, portraying them as bandits and killers.

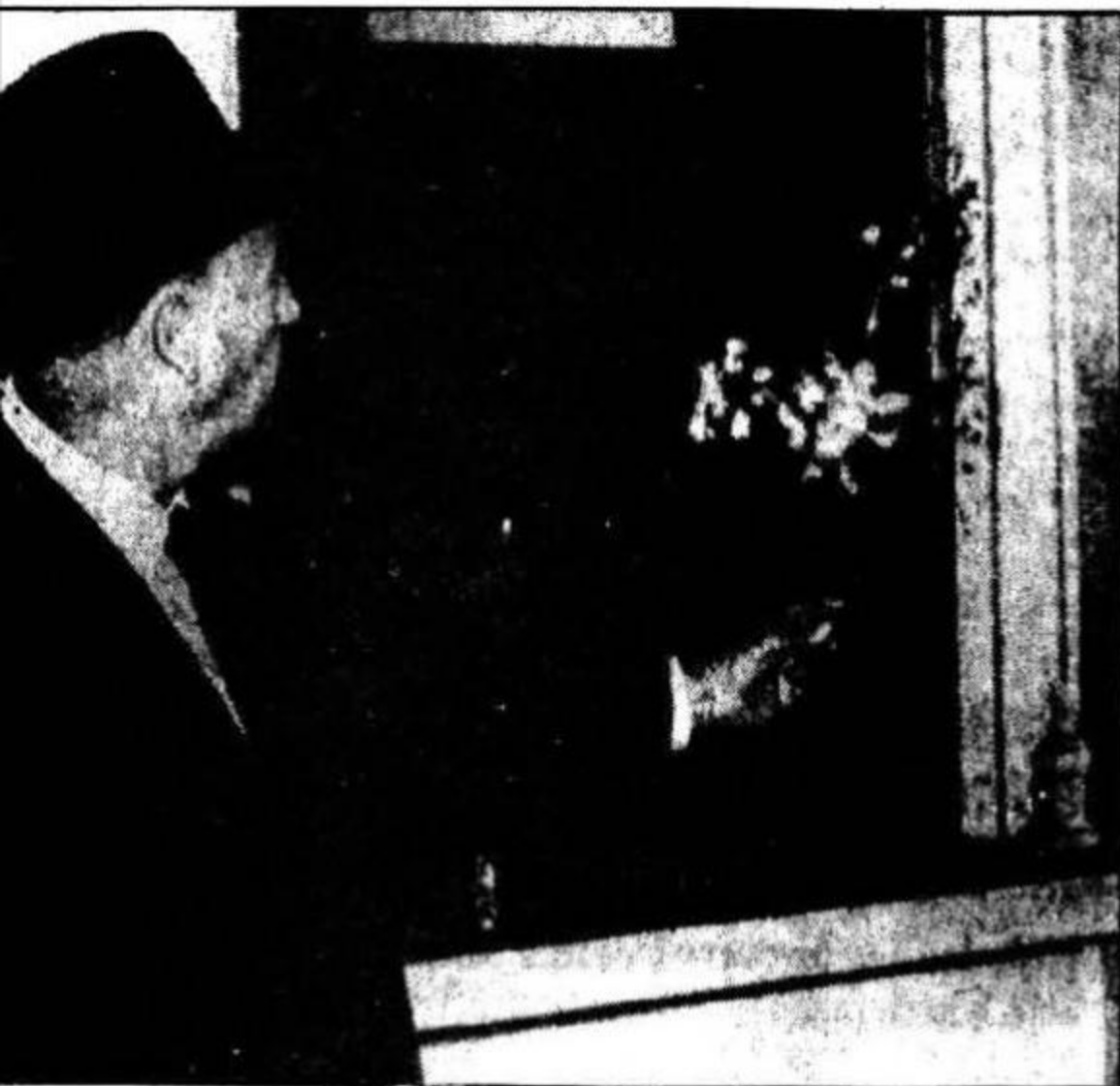
White supremacist witch hunts and media campaigns portrayed the BLA as gun-toting savages dedicated to killing white people. In New Orleans in 1973, a Black man named Mark Essex set up a sniper post on the roof of a building. In response to Essex's action, the BLA issued a statement saying that they understood and defended the actions Black people took in response to the pressures of genocidal imperialism. The bourgeois press, on the other hand, turned the action into a sensationalized national news story about a crazed gunman. New Orleans police seized the opportunity to sweep through the Black community, terrorizing Black people

and searching for BLA fugitives. Police set up road blocks and check points checking for Black people's ID's much like the apartheid pass system. This attack finally resulted in the capture of Herman Bell and other alleged BLA members.

The BLA fought on. Prisoners of War fought to turn kangaroo courts into arenas of political struggle. Once held, many warriors organized prison escapes, fighting for the right and duty of African POW's to escape. In early 1974, two attempts were made to liberate captives in New York's Tombs Prison; one involved using a cutting torch which ran out of gas within inches of successfully liberating several prisoners. Another action involved an amphibious landing in Rikers Island, another New York prison.

Safiya Asiya Bukhari and Henry Sha Sha Brown were among those who were liberated although both were recaptured. In May 1975, Melvin Kearney was killed while trying to escape the Brooklyn House of Detention. His partner managed to escape but was also captured again.

From inside US prisons, BLA POW's such as Assata Shakur, Sundiata Acoli, Albert Washington, Anthony Bottom, Richard Dhoruba Moore, Henry Sha Sha Brown, Asiya Safiya Bukhari, Herman Bell, Gabriel and Cisco Torres, and many others, are giving leadership to the overall Black liberation struggle. Some of these comrades, for instance, have been a moving force in the



The SF police chief inspects the Ingleside police station, where the BLA responded to the state's murder of George Jackson with an attack that killed one pig and threw the colonial police apparatus into a state of frenzied alert.

Prisoner Petition Campaign to the United Nations aimed at exposing US prisons as instruments of genocide, and at bringing international recognition to the struggles of Prisoners of War in the US.

The Black Liberation Army has survived violent attacks by the state and the political attacks by the white left. Today, the BLA is very much alive and continues to grow inside and outside prison walls, carrying forward protracted war for Black liberation.

From the first actions of the BLA in 1970 to the present, there has been very little solidarity from the white left for the BLA's politics or actions. There is a continuing lack of support for Assata Shakur, Sundiata Acoli and other BLA POW's. White inaction and denunciation of the BLA rests in fear of repression and fear of the life-and-death terms of revolutionary struggle. This fear has been justified by political lines that condemn righteous armed struggle for Black liberation as "adventurism and terrorism."

In this context white left forces who have stood in solidarity with the BLA stand out.

Marilyn Buck (now escaped from prison) was convicted of allegedly purchasing ammunition under a false name because of her political support for Black liberation and the BLA. White people refused to testify before a grand jury investigating the BLA in 1975. Some white forces have worked to free Assata Shakur and Sundiata Acoli in the past couple of years.

In the white left, we urgently need to expand the movement in solidarity with the liberation struggle of the Black nation and the fighters of the Black Liberation Army. PFOC is reprinting BLA materials to contribute to an understanding of their politics and history in order to change the pattern of white left collaboration with the state's attacks. PFOC is in continuing struggle against the white supremacist aspects of our politics and practice which have kept us from building necessary solidarity in the past. The BLA communiques sum up important and hard-learned lessons of their revolutionary experience and point clear directions for the future. We need to fight in solidarity with these politics now.

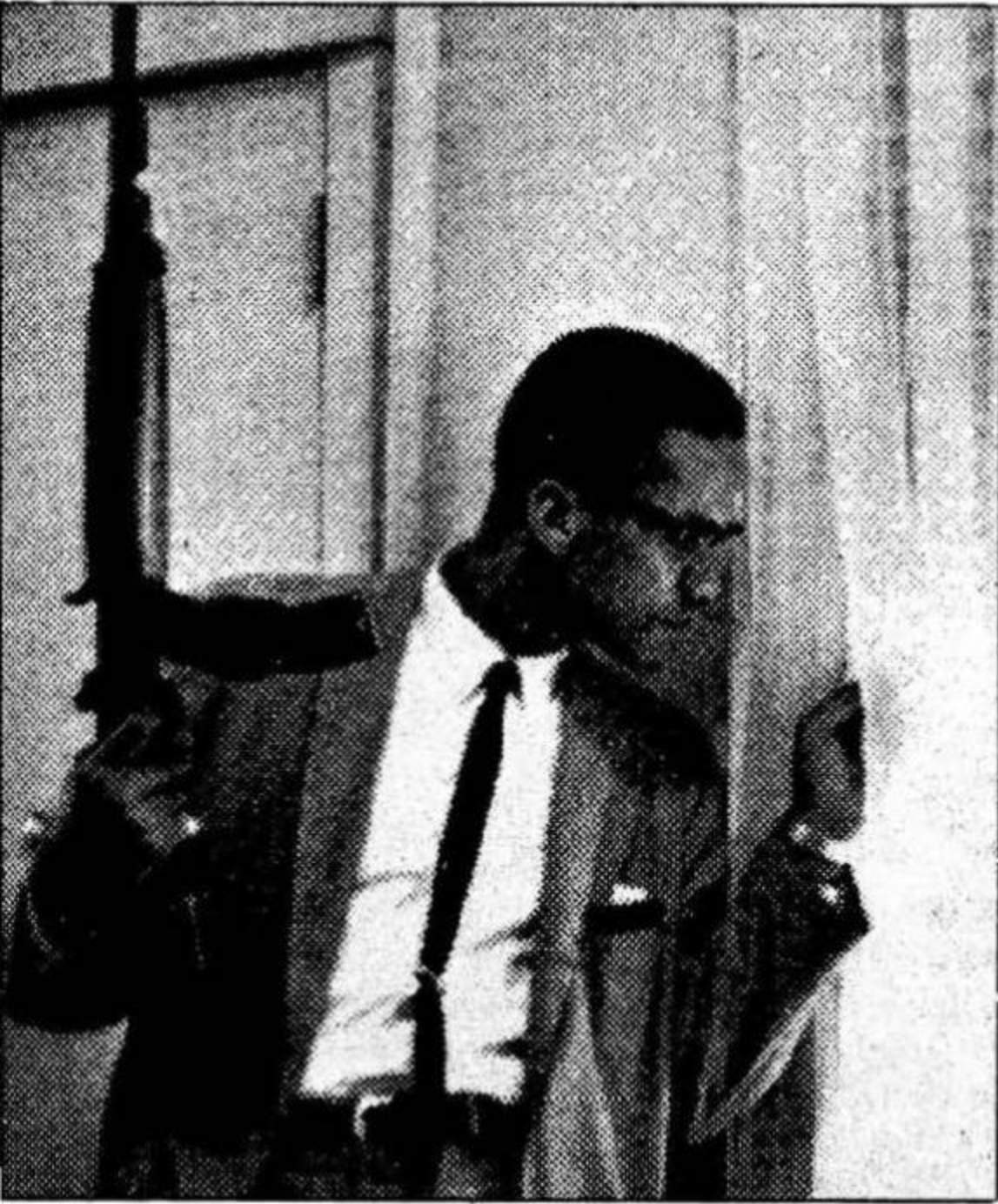


ON MALCOLM X

February 21, 1978

It is unfortunate that it must be the anniversary of the event of Brother Malcolm's brutal assassination upon which we have come together to commemorate him. If ever there was or could be one person to whom we could point as being the embodiment, the symbol of the struggle of captive Africans-in-amerika for freedom from colonial oppression and racist violence, that person would have to be El-Hajj Malik Al-Shabbazz—Malcolm X.

In recalling the memory of the man, we are made aware of the legacy he left us. We recall Malcolm's wisdom in dealing with the principles of unity. He would say, "Keep your religion in the closet—religion is a personal thing between you and your God." And he would go on to say that, once your differences had been settled, when you emerged from the closet you presented a united front. He also said that we do not come under attack because we're Muslim or Christian or Baptist, but because we are Black, the descendents of Mother-Africa. Today we can dialectically take this statement a step further and say that we do not come under attack because we belong to the African People's Party or the African People's Socialist Party or the Republic of New Africa or the Black Liberation Army—we come under attack because all of us are involved in the struggle for the political, social and economic liberation of the African colony held captive in amerika. And all the people who make up this colony, as well as those who comprise the Indian colony, also known as reservations, and the Boriquan colony, also known as "El Barrio," are economically exploited, politically enslaved and socially degraded because of the racist, barbarous attitude that first made the european conquistadores feel that they had the right to kill off and enslave entire nations, take the land that they lived upon which belonged to no one, claim it as their own and then refer to themselves in history as "discoverers" and "pioneers." Is it any wonder, then, that today the descendents of these same racist families, these same expanded capitalist conglomerations, can so effectively spread their lies



and cause disunity among our people, can make us even believe that we are the criminals and not the victims, can make us believe that those of us who undertake the task of making war against this beast are common criminals, and not liberation fighters?

If Malcolm's legacy had to be summed up in two words, we believe those words would be "Unity" and "Struggle." Principled unity, based upon the desire of the people to organize a resistance against the racist, brutal aggression of the white capitalist colonizer and his flunkies, who can come in all shades and sizes, and struggle; not only armed defensive struggle, bloody struggle, against our enemy, the white big businesses, landowners, and all, but struggle amongst ourselves, peaceful, principled struggle to resolve our differences, stop our petty, divisive power struggles amongst ourselves, come together and pose a united front; and then in this manner, armed, united and aware of who and what we are and therefore aware also of what we must do, begin to implement in very concrete and meaningful ways some of the dreams that our leaders gone before us had in mind when they spoke of freedom, tried to awaken the unaware among us in the name of freedom, and eventually made the ultimate sacrifice in the name of freedom. Not freedom to get high everyday, or freedom to be promiscuous, or freedom to deal dope or slap a sister upside the head—but freedom from the crushing oppression of poverty, of crime, of old tenements and leaking ceilings and no money for food, let alone wine—freedom from being a slave, the only real freedom there is.

WE of the Black Liberation Army, in concert with our other revolutionary nationalist brothers and sisters, intend to hold fast to this legacy, indeed, we intend to make it a reality. The army of liberation is not dead, nor is it sleeping, it is building. The struggle will continue, and we will be free—or we will not be anything at all.

The people will be victorious—all power to the people—free the Black colony. □



WHAT IS PROTRACTED WAR FOR THE BLACK LIBERATION STRUGGLE?

If the nature of the crisis of the system of oppression is protracted, that is, drawn out over a considerable period of time, then our struggle to defeat this exploitive system and acquire self-determination is also of a protracted nature. But why a protracted war?

The very reality of black people's experience in North America proves that we are, and have been in a state of undeclared war. This is a difficult realization for many to make, especially those who still have their minds in pawn to the great American delusion, but often the truth is harsh in its naked form. The nature of this war assumes many different guises, sometimes overtly violent, sometimes economically restrictive and still other times socially repressive. If we bear in mind that the modern wars of U.S. imperialism waged against third world people have not all been completely military campaigns, but have also included social pacification programs, economic aid to reactionary regimes, political-police extermination of legitimate opposition and the like, then it should not be too hard for us to realize that in its policies against blacks, poor people, and other national minorities the U.S. government is waging an undeclared war. The primary aspects of this undeclared war are class repression, and casualties can be counted on both the welfare-unemployment rolls, and the statistics of murdered black youth and prison-crime reports.

This undeclared war has masked itself as "domestic reform," "law and order," and "a return to traditional American values" a la Nixonian doctrine. The ending of overt U.S. military involvement in Vietnam has led to an increasingly reactionary stance on the part of the majority of white Americans. The vile and deceitful nature of America's institutions were revealed glaringly by the Vietnam imperialist venture, and has cast many into the pit of uncertainty.

Of course the post Vietnam revelations of government deception told black people nothing "new" about the ruling class institutions of American society. But it revealed these institutions for what they are, for the first time America could see what was perpetrated in their name. This was/is most uncomfortable, for white America cherishes its self-deceptions of righteousness and democracy. With the eroding of these self-delusions, our position as a national minority has become increasingly endangered. There is the foul odor of reactionary "Americanism" in the air, fanned and blown into the confused faces of white America by a ruling class beset with all manner of economic, political, and social ills—which demand attention. (The landslide victory of Nixon in '72 was an endorsement, conscious or unconscious, of white America's deep-set reactionary nature and confusion as manifested in the Nixonian doctrine.)

The onslaught of domestic repression, social programs of class repression, and "law and order" are upon us all now. We must build the means to combat these programs of the enemy, or our very survival will be severely in question. So when we say a state of undeclared war exists, we mean a domestic war, an economic, a military, and a political war. We therefore must fight this war on all fronts.

The strategy of protracted war is suited to our objective circumstances. The oppressor is strong while we are weak. But his strength is not absolute, is not without its limitations. These limitations are to be found within his seeming strength. For purely military reasons we will not go into them all, but the immense size and urban centralization of the economic strengths of our oppressor make him vulnerable, his intensified difficulties on the economic and social levels make him tactically vulnerable, the erosion of his reactionary political face make him politically vulnerable, and subject to social dysfunction. In addition, the exploitive relationships of capital are approaching their limitations, while we are progressive and as of yet have not reached our full potential. For these reasons and many, protracted struggle is a correct strategic line. We must refuse to fight decisive battles on the military level, while striving to increase our potential to harm ruling class interests. We must organize on the mass level along these same principles: refusing to fight battles that cannot be won, while constantly engaging in those that will build the

confidence of our people. This does not mean an abdication of responsibility to raise the level of consciousness of our people by engaging in struggles that will only "enlighten" them, it merely means that each tactical struggle around particular issues must have a specific and concrete goal that can be won.

Protracted struggle is the method of struggle that shuns bringing conflict to one decisive showdown. Instead it seeks to wear down the enemy, force him to utilize all of his manpower without securing a decisive victory, while the revolutionary forces increase their strength and raise people's awareness in the process. Protracted struggle aims at increasing the social burdens upon the oppressor, while these same burdens are the catalyst for the masses organizing themselves. In short, protracted struggle is the process by which the enemy is weakened, demoralized, and made politically bankrupt, until our relationship to his strength is tipped in our objective favor.

We maintain that on the military level, urban guerilla war, based on the strategic principles of protracted struggle can succeed in its aim of increasing the crisis of the capitalist system of oppression. And that urban guerilla struggle serves as a dialectical and necessary element in the fight for national black self-determination, without which we will be defeated.

* * * * *

... We have found the democratic process under capitalism to be merely a means by which capital controls the masses. It is a means of mass diversion, designed to keep the powerless classes politically impotent while at the same time fostering the illusion that real power can be gained through the electoral process. Black People should know better. In a nation based on the false principle of majority rule we are a marginal minority and therefore our right to self-determination cannot be won in the arena of our oppressor.

The rejection of reformism however, is much deeper than the above reasons. For if reformism is a rejection of any meaningful change, it is also a rejection of revolutionary violence, and therefore reformism is a functional ignorance of the dynamics of Black liberation. This is because the character of reformism is based on unprincipled class collaboration with our enemy. The ideals of class collaboration do not stand in opposition to our people's oppression, but instead consistently seeks to reform the oppressive system. Reform of the oppressive system can never benefit its victims, in the final analysis the system of oppression was created to insure the rule of particular racist classes and sanctify their capital. To seek reform therefore inevitably leads to, or begins with, the recognition of the laws of our oppressor as being valid.

Those within the movement who condemn the revolutionary violence of anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist, and revolutionary Black nationalist groups are in essence weakening themselves. These fools do not understand the inter-active need for revolutionary violence with other forms of struggle, and because they do not understand the real dynamics involved they seriously inhibit the development of the liberation movement as a whole... These reformists in liberationist garb should understand that unless the movement cultivates its capacity to fight the enemy on all fronts, no front will secure any real victories. It is abysmal ignorance that imagines our oppression in any other terms than undeclared war.

How will the movement as a whole be able to fight the oppressor in the future when all other "legal" methods are completely exhausted? How will we implement political struggle without the machinery and capacity for revolutionary violence—when it is abundantly clear that our oppressor maintains armed organs of violence for the enforcement of his rule? We as a movement will be unable to fight in the future if we do not develop the capacity for revolutionary violence in the present. But revolutionary violence is not an alternative to mass movement and organization, it is complementary to mass struggle, it is another front in the total liberation process. Those who put the question of revolutionary violence in "alternative" terms are guilty of crippled politics at best or reactionary politics at worst. Those involved in the total revolutionary process, yet claim not to "endorse" revolutionary violence when it occurs, are attempting to "legitimize" their existence at the expense of the entire struggle. The only "legitimacy" these people can possibly be seeking in such cases is bourgeois legitimacy. These type people further confuse the masses, for revolutionary violence is not clarified and extended in order to undermine the psychological dependence black people still have on racist reactionary "legality." This is the vilest of sins, one for which everyone will pay during heightened repression.

We therefore do not view the "law" of our class enemies as valid, nor do we feel restricted in struggle to his laws. On the other hand, we understand the "tactical" value of using the law and consequently we understand the tactical value of reform in the liberation process. For example, school takeovers by community parents, rent strikes by tenants, labor union takeovers by dissident members, etc.; utilizing their systems and built-in safeguards to obtain certain goals that place the enemy at a temporary disadvantage. But we maintain there is only tactical value to reform when there exists other forms of revolutionary struggle against the whole of the capitalist structure. Reform as such is inherently reactionary and perpetuates psychological dependence on the enemy, while confusing the true class contradictions between ourselves and the enemy. Considering these factors, we maintain that reform can never be anything more than a tactic, never a complete strategy, never offering in itself any revolutionary change. While it may offer the Black bourgeoisie rewards, it can never be the road to self-determination for the entire black populace.

We also strongly condemn those who claim to be progressive, yet depreciate revolutionary violence of an oppressed peoples in their struggle for liberation. There can be no conditions on our fight for freedom except those set by the oppressed themselves. Those who claim that revolutionary violence gives the enemy the opportunity to repress the movement in general are profoundly mistaken if they think the reactionary government need such excuses for repression, or that the government does not recognize the real danger in allowing a movement to develop the full blown capacity to wage armed struggle. The B.L.A. has undertaken the task of building just such a capacity, along with other comrades on the clandestine level. . .



LOOKING BACK

Over the past four years since the birth of the B.L.A. we have experienced many tactical setbacks, some have been costly in material, others in manpower (P.O.W.s) and the most costly in blood of comrades, who gave their lives. Nevertheless the B.L.A. still lives, still continues to struggle with arms against the oppressor.

In the beginning when we started out our primary targets were the police as a political consequence for their murders and brutalities against Black and Third World peoples. Bank monies were expropriated as a means of support for guerrilla units and seen as an attack on capitalism. Most of our activities were carried out on the East and West coast in large cities with the hope of raising the militancy of the people to resist the oppressive state apparatus. The spark we hoped would start the fire that would burn Babylon down was extinguished by State propaganda organs and special anti-guerrilla squads. Many comrades moved to the South hoping to establish a southern base; this too failed because we lacked knowledge of terrain and the people, so again we moved back to the cities, this time as fugitives with little popular support among the masses. Our primary activity at that period was hiding and carrying out expropriations. With the deaths of Woody and Kimu we launched assaults against the police that set them on edge; their counter-attack saw us at the end of 1973 with four dead, over twenty comrades imprisoned in New York alone. In New Orleans, Los Angeles, and Georgia, B.L.A. members were taken prisoner by Federal agents working with local police to crush the B.L.A. 1974 found the guns of the B.L.A. quiet until April, when with so many comrades imprisoned we assaulted the Tombs in an effort to liberate some comrades; the attempt was unsuccessful; and two weeks later found three more comrades captured in Connecticut. later found three more comrades captured in Connecticut.

While our ranks outside were being diminished, our ranks inside started to grow. Within the prisons themselves comrades launched numerous assaults and attempt escapes on a regular basis. Before 74 was over, another comrade was shot and captured, victim of an informant. Now in the third month of 1975 we



Above, Melvin Kearney, killed in a prison escape. Right, Zayd Malik Shakur, shot down by New Jersey State troopers.



have one dead, two captured in Virginia, and another escape attempt in New York. Since the beginning we have shown a willingness to struggle and our efforts have not been in vain, for we are rich in experience that comes with trial and error. Now in the year 1975—the year of sorting out and consolidation—we must sum up those experiences, analyze them and return to the front.

What Have We Learned?

We have learned much about the enemy and about ourselves. The enemy we have come to learn is weak, easily demoralized, and ineffective against the audacity of the guerrilla. He relies heavily on informants, the news media, and technology to combat the guerrilla. He takes advantage of our mistakes, uses a high concentration of troops as a means to intimidate and ward off attack. The enemy implements pacification programs among the people along with terror tactics in an effort to forestall the revolutionary tide. In essence a lot of the enemy's strength comes from our own weakness. True, the enemy is materially and technically superior, but these gaps will be closed once we organize ourselves, instill either self-discipline or organizational discipline among our ranks, improve our technical know how, strengthen our lines of communication. We have learned ourselves that we lacked a strong ideological base and political base; yet there is great potential for the latter. In failing to lay down an over-all strategy we have become isolated from the masses, we have failed in seeing the strategical victories in our tactical setbacks, and thus failed to press the attack. There is much we have learned and much to be learned—how to improve relationships between comrades and the people, and comrades and each other—yet by continuing to struggle we will overcome these difficulties with revolutionary determination.

In Closing

In looking back we must never forget those comrades who gave their lives for the people, nor forget our mistakes but constantly sum up the things we've learned. Yet our look back must be a glance to see where we're going so as not to travel the same road where so many difficulties beset us. Let us look to the future with faith and knowledge that the experiences of the past will be guides in assessing and implementing our present programs that will take us to victory in the future.

Get Organized and Consolidate
To Liberate

Revolution Until Victory
Coordinating Committee
Black Liberation Army

SOLIDARITY WITH THE SLA PRISONERS OF WAR

On August 31, 1978, Emily and Bill Harris pleaded guilty to the kidnapping of Patricia Hearst in 1974. In solidarity with these prisoners of war and the other SLA POWs, Russell Little and Joe Remiro, *Breakthrough* is printing the statement the

Harrises made to their supporters in the courtroom. We are also printing our analysis of the significance of the SLA for revolutionary movement in the US.

Today we take full responsibility for our participation in the first political kidnapping in this country—the kidnapping of Patricia Hearst. We are entering guilty pleas to what the judicial system calls “simple kidnapping” but nothing about our actions today or those of four-and-a-half years ago has been simple. So it comes as no surprise to us that our feelings today are complex—pride in affirming what our actions accomplished and what we learned from them; a very definite pain that six of our close friends died, Russ and Joe are in prison and the two of us will be separated from each other by years more in prison; a relief that the uncertainty of the past years is over; and a confidence in our combined strength to continue fighting for the principles we believe in—the right of all people to control their own lives and to be free no matter what the costs.

We participated in an act which removed Patricia Hearst from her home, her way of life, the people she knew and the privilege which had insulated her from the oppression that so many people suffer. Out of all the lies, distortions, exaggerations that have emanated from the Hearst family in an attempt to fool the public—one fact alone has been true. Patricia Hearst was kidnapped. She was *not* brainwashed, beaten, tortured or raped. She was *not* locked alone in a closet for days and weeks on end. She was *not* coerced into rejecting her family and remaining with the people who made up the SLA.

She was kidnapped by a group of eight SLA members. Our politics had various origins—the prison movement, the anti-war movement, the women’s movement—but all developed at a time when the Nixon White House was attempting to crush all forms of legal dissent through infiltration, surveillance, murder, break-ins, frame-up criminal charges. The eight of us, along with others in this country, responded by translating our beliefs into illegal armed actions as a means to attack power and wealth. We were fully aware of the risks—death, imprisonment, failure—but we all felt totally committed to any and all vehicles of change that could propel us closer to uprooting oppression and realizing a free society.

Our actions in 1974 forced the Hearst family to funnel two million dollars worth of food into the poor communities of California. The sanctuary of invisibility that the ruling class has so long enjoyed in this country was shattered. The source and extent of the Hearst’s wealth was exposed through the channels of their own media empire and put in brutal contrast to the poverty of millions of people.

At one time Patricia Hearst felt the same pride and self-respect as we did because all three of us saw the events of February 1974 as a coming of age—a leap in our understanding and growth. But since her arrest, she has never allowed herself the pride of confronting the truth and taking responsibility for actions she made of her own free will. Likewise her family and other members of the ruling class will never take responsibility for the oppression that the very existence of wealth and privilege makes inevitable.

A plea does not represent bowing down to the state. It does not mean that we have been given any favors. We have *not* offered them anything. We have only made the pragmatic choice of accepting what they offer because, very simply, it’s the vehicle by which we have gained control over the amount of time we will do in prison—the means by which we can be back on the streets the soonest.

Being tried on the State’s terms according to their distorted sense of justice and fairness, we would have been found guilty of participating in the Hearst kidnapping. But the State’s objective was far greater



Camilla Hall, Bill Harris, Emily Harris, Willy Wolfe, Angela Atwood, Nancy Ling Perry, Donald De Freeze, and Mizmoon Soltysik. These photos appeared in the Hearst papers while the SLA was being sought.

than demonstrating our involvement in that act—they intended to bury us alive under thirteen charges carrying a penalty of life without possibility of parole—a sentence that's been called the living death. Their objective was not grounded in the acts we were in fact responsible for, but rather a desire to see our ideas—our revolutionary commitment—locked away for life.

Today we take responsibility for four acts—which is translated into four-and-a-half more years in prison—three more years beyond our present term. Within four-and-a-half years we'll be back on the streets where we definitely want to be. In this sense we have succeeded in forcing the state to back down.

Our plea today will allow us to speak out on our own terms about the kidnapping of Patricia Hearst—we will be able to share the truth as we know it about the SLA and Patricia Hearst's involvement. We will be able to openly analyze the accomplishments, the failures, the history, the context from our personal perspective. Many of these facts would have come out in a trial, but not on our terms. The arena of the courtroom wrenches events out of context, makes some admissible and some not, and covers everything with the fog of unreality that passes for justice.

But why was the state forced to make these concessions to us? First, they had very real fears about the credibility of their key witness—Patricia Hearst. They could not separate the truth from the lies and they knew we could. They were dealing with the unknown and we had the facts. Second, and probably more important, the State has been aligned with the Hearst family all along—the State with its judicial system is in fact an arm of those who possess wealth and power. We believe the State was forced to back off its objectives in order to protect Patricia Hearst and the Hearst family. In defending ourselves against a sentence of life without possibility of parole, we would have torn apart the web of lies Patricia Hearst has spun ever since her arrest. We would have exposed how the truth of the conditions she lived under after her kidnapping, her relationship to those who had kidnapped her and her feelings about her family all fit together with her decision to remain with the SLA. The humiliating and devastating exposure of the truth would have proved to be a serious setback for the Hearst campaign to get Patricia Hearst released from prison immediately. Also, we would have pursued in the courtroom what the Hearst kidnapping only began—exposure of the Hearst family's history of greed, manipulation of public opinion, open advocacy of racism and championing of imperialist aggression throughout the world. We believe the so-called impartial judicial system was forced to negotiate with us because ruling class interests were at stake. Finally, the State "bargained" with us to save the thousands of dollars that our trial would have cost.

We approached this trial with only the power of our revolutionary commitment and we enter our plea today on that basis. This same commitment by the SLA in 1974 forced concessions from the Hearst family in the form of food and access to the media. In 1977 the two of us forced concessions from the courts by using their own judicial system to fight for and win appointment of our own lawyers. Our plea today represents even further concessions on the part of the State. While they are forced to back off the brutal thrust of their objective, they are still in a position to extract a price—four-and-a-half more years in prison for us. Like anyone, we experience doubts, pain, sadness and loneliness in confronting this, but our feelings exist within a pervading sense of strength, knowing that "time" can't destroy the sense of freedom that's within us.

Valuable years of our lives will be defined by the cold reality of separation from each other, our families, our friends; isolation in maximum security (again a penalty for our ideas, not the acts we are convicted of); degradation of being treated as less than human; violence that spreads like a disease from the racist, sexist hatred of reactionary guards and prisoners. For us this will leave permanent scars but it's

merely a short term loss while our gains are long term—the historic accomplishments of the Hearst kidnapping can never be erased and we will return to the streets as two strong individuals still committed to change. Ironically, the State has only the short term gain of locking up our bodies while they extract their price. The long term loss will always be theirs because they cannot destroy us or the revolutionary potential of the American people. □

THE SLA AND REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT

February 4, 1974, an unprecedented political kidnapping in the United States shocked and jolted the US state and ruling class. Patricia Hearst, a member of one of the most powerful ruling class families, had been kidnapped by an armed underground organization, the Symbionese Liberation Army (SLA). The Hearst empire was put on the defensive, forced to feed thousands of people and made to give front page coverage to the politics and actions of a revolutionary underground group. The SLA demonstrated to the world that the imperialist ruling class was vulnerable to attack by a small number of revolutionaries within the borders of the United States.

Today the Hearsts and the state have been forced to back down from the most serious charges against the Harrises in order to protect Patricia. However, the four surviving SLA members, Emily and Bill and Russell Little and Joe Remiro are still in the state's hands, suffering continual harassment and brutal conditions. It is an important time to build support for these SLA prisoners of war to prevent the state from moving against them when they are outside of the public eye.

In kidnapping Patricia Hearst and demanding \$6 million of free food for the poor as a good faith gesture, the SLA attacked one of the world's most notorious enemies — the Hearst family. The history of the Hearst family is one of violence, exploitation and domination over colonized peoples within the US and around the world. For over a hundred years, the Hearst media empire has been a principle means by which imperialism has maintained ideological control over people's minds within the US. It has perfected the use of lies, distortions and white supremacist ideology to build a base of support, particularly within the oppressor nation, for imperialism's conquest and warfare. The Hearsts stole silver and timber from Native peoples. Hearst publications helped launch the US into the Spanish-American war, resulting in the colonization of Puerto Rico. They encouraged intervention

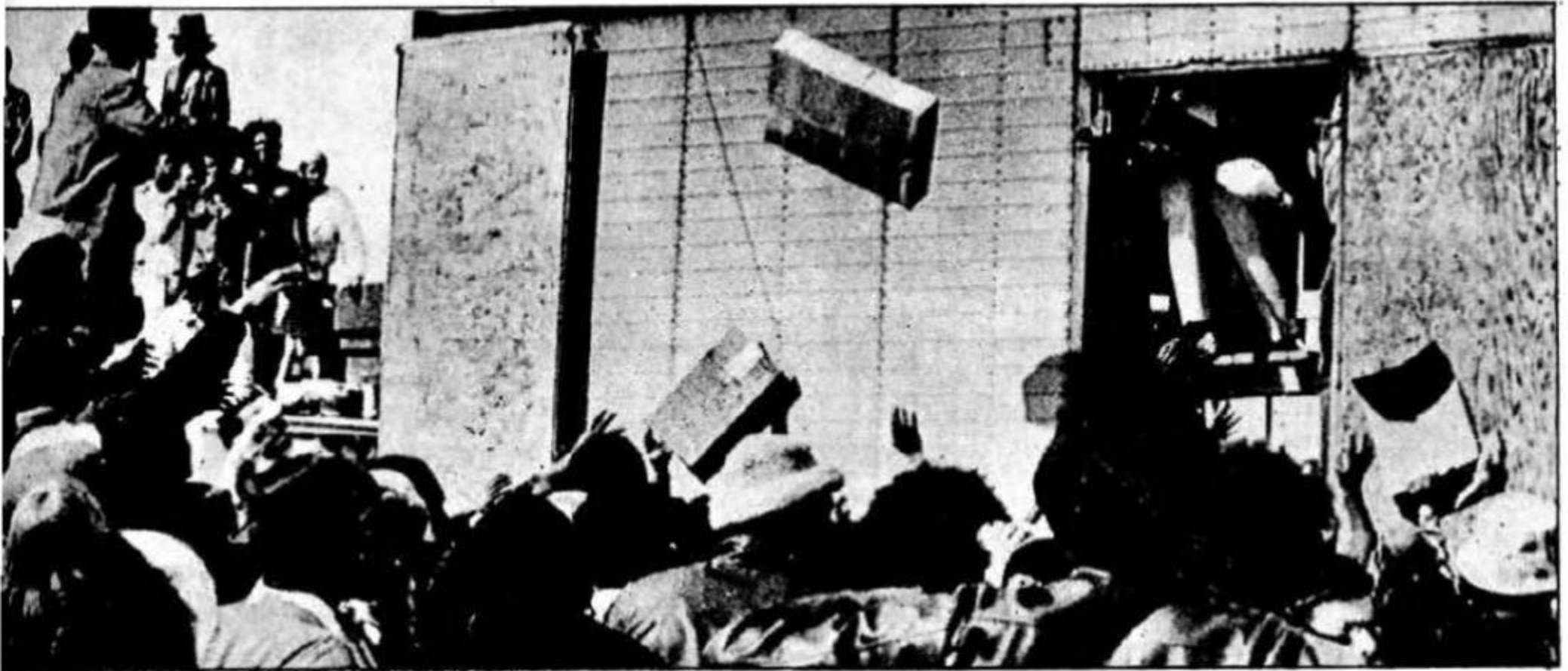
in the Mexican revolution, promoted financial assistance for Adolf Hitler and fanned chauvinist support for US aggression in Viet Nam.

After decades of Hearst violence against oppressed people worldwide, the SLA used revolutionary violence to demand food for a tiny portion of the peoples the Hearsts had robbed. The response of thousands of people, primarily Black and other colonized people, to the People In Need program, demonstrated to the world the poverty and hunger that existed within the borders of the United States. The SLA communiques exposed the wealth, power and bloodthirsty history of the Hearst empire on the pages of its very own newspapers in sharp contrast to the version of reality that is usually put forth there. The SLA showed that the only way such power could be threatened and made to give anything up was through the use of force.

In a period when the white left was consolidated around an opportunist politics which liquidated



Catherine and Randolph Hearst, enemies of the world's people. This picture in the Hearst press was captioned "For them . . . the ordeal goes on" in an attempt to win sympathy for these oppressors.



While the media predicted that no one would take "SLA food," thousands of people, especially from Black and other colonized communities, demanded the food that was rightfully theirs, defying police intimidation and the contemptuous way the food was distributed.

support for national liberation and armed struggle, the SLA committed itself to armed actions against imperialism. It acted on the basis of politics, led by the Black Liberation Movement, which argued that the imperialist, fascist system rested on genocide and terror and must be opposed through revolutionary armed struggle. Inspired by the example of other underground organizations, particularly the Black Liberation Army, the SLA came together to fight the state's violence with revolutionary violence. The white members of the SLA consciously chose to break with a history which found white people sitting back easy, talking and debating, while Third World people were doing all the fighting and dying, taking all the risks.

The SLA used a revolutionary tactic employed by urban guerrillas around the world to attack the ruling class at its vulnerable points. The most open support for the SLA action came from Black and other colonized communities where people standing on the foodlines were clear that the food was rightfully theirs. Other strong expressions of solidarity with the SLA primarily came from oppressed nation prisoners and underground organizations. The Black Liberation Army issued one of the strongest statements of support:

We of the Black Liberation Army support your call to arms. We recognize your ideology as extremely progressive. We recognize that the suffering of the world's population is connected to one disease —

the Corporate Fascist Military empire. . . . We understand that the SLA acts are political acts and that the power of the act is an example of what an armed combatant can accomplish. (March 1974)

In direct conflict with this type of support, most of the white left took its stand on the side of the ruling class. While thousands of people stood on the food lines, while California governor Ronald Reagan publicly suggested that botulism be put in the free food, most forces on the left condemned the SLA for "alienating the masses" and creating sympathy for the Hearsts. The Guardian argued that "The SLA had managed to create widespread sympathy for the Hearst family, normally one of the most despised of the country's predatory class." According to this absurd line of reasoning, hatred against the ruling class was turned into sympathy because an action was taken that made them give up a little wealth. Jerry Rubin pleaded with the SLA "If you kill Patricia Hearst, you will be outraging human beings everywhere." Remiro and Little, locked down in prison, responded to such arguments:

This is the same brand of morality that claims to put the highest value on life in respect to Patricia Hearst and . . . allows the government to carry out an organized terrorist campaign of murder and oppression in this country's ghettos, barrios, reservations and prisons.



Police stormed into Watts, terrorizing the whole community, and burning the SLA alive.

Imperialism propagates this brand of morality which demands sympathy for every mishap that the rich and powerful suffer, while ignoring millions of colonized peoples around the world who are starving and dying as a result of this ruling class. This imperialist ideology has its greatest hold on the oppressor nation working class because of its material stake in identifying with the interests of the ruling class over the interests of colonized peoples.

The white left pushed this bourgeois morality and sympathy for the Hearsts instead of struggling within mass movements to raise the level of consciousness concerning the genocide of imperialism, instead of arguing that kidnapping is a justified act against a family that is responsible for murder and brutality against millions of people. The left found every type of excuse to denounce the SLA and to call into question the motivations behind their action. It argued that armed struggle was premature because the 'masses of working class people' were not ready to participate in it. It used the consciousness and conditions of the oppressor nation working class as an excuse for its own inaction.

Another widespread argument was that the SLA was bringing down repression on the left. This argument conveniently ignored the history of Cointelpro or the existence of standing armies of police inside Black and other colonized communities. It distorted the real terms of revolutionary struggle. The state will always move to repress any action that actually threatens imperialism. Only political activities which the state knows it can co-opt and contain will be allowed to develop peacefully.

Instead of politically arming people against the state's repression, the white left mirrored and abetted the state's position, literally helping to set up the SLA to be killed. The left used Cointelpro type tactics, spreading racist rumors which most proba-

bly originated with the state that Cinque was a police agent who controlled his white women followers through violence, sex and rape. The fury and viciousness of the state's response was in part possible because of the lack of support given to the SLA. After six members of the SLA — Cinque, Nancy Ling Perry, Mizmoon (Patricia Soltysik), Camilla Hall, Willie Wolfe and Angela Atwood — were burned alive on nationwide TV, most sectors of the left justified their lack of response to the state's attack by claiming that the SLA brought it on themselves.

On the other hand, there were some expressions of grief, rage and solidarity, mainly among Black people but among some whites as well. Two hundred people attended a memorial rally in a Black neighborhood in San Francisco shortly after the massacre. And in Cleveland Ohio, 2,000 people attended Cinque's funeral where they heard Cinque's younger brother, Delano De Freeze declare "My fallen brother died for a nation. That nation might not exist yet, but it will." (Chronicle May 24, '74.)

* * * * *

In September 1975, Patty Hearst, Wendy Yoshimura (a comrade who was a fugitive but not a member of the SLA) and Bill and Emily Harris were captured in San Francisco. Since being locked down in prison, the state's attack on the SLA has continued. This year, on the fourth anniversary of the SLA massacre, a fire was set at Santa Rita prison where Emily had just been transferred. The guards did nothing to save her. She escaped death only due to the efforts of another woman prisoner. Bill has been isolated from the general prison population since his capture. The prison administration has continually attempted to set him up, as well as Joe and Russ, to be vamped on by

reactionary prisoners for their outspoken support of Third World and other prisoners. The state has not forgotten that these white revolutionaries took up arms against imperialism and has treated them accordingly. The Harrises have just won a victory over the state, but we must not forget the increasing determination of the state to suppress and isolate all those who take up arms against imperialism.

Within the US at this time the forces of Black liberation are rebuilding, and Native struggles for control over their sovereign lands are intensifying. The mass and armed struggle of the Puerto Rican people for independence is reaching new heights. Increased repression is necessary for imperialism to prevent political and material support for national liberation and armed struggle from developing. Colonized peoples are the main targets for increased repression. But white people and organizations that support national liberation and armed struggle, like the SLA or the LA Five (anti-imperialists falsely accused of conspiracy to blow up the office of right-wing California senator John Briggs) are also earmarked for attack.

Ideological warfare against "terrorism" is being used to assure a public base of support for the repression of all freedom fighters. The recent wave of anti-terrorist propaganda is aimed at winning people to the belief that freedom fighters ("terrorists") are trying to "discredit the democratic process, to force a nation to take counter-measures so drastic that they destroy freedom along with the

terrorists" (*Politics Today*). This type of reasoning paves the way for public compliance with increasing repression and fascism by holding anti-imperialist fighters, who are mainly members of oppressed nations, responsible for repression.

The white left has continued to echo the state's line, maintaining that armed struggle as waged by the FALN in the US and Puerto Rico, by the Red Army Faction in Germany and the Red Brigades in Italy, is terrorism and only brings down increased repression. The recent kidnap and assassination of Italian imperialist Aldo Moro was deplored on the basis of the same warped morality that denounced the kidnap of Patricia Hearst.

At this stage, we on the white left have the choice of either siding with imperialist repression by denouncing armed struggle and those who are waging it, or actively preparing to counter the state's terror by joining in solidarity with freedom fighters around the world who are struggling to destroy imperialism and colonialism.

Bill and Emily, Russ and Joe are white people who acted on the basis of their belief that imperialism was a system that had to be overthrown for all people to gain freedom. It is our responsibility on the white left to turn around our history of abandoning the SLA to the state, and build support for them to make sure they will survive their time in prison and get out on the streets again.

Letters or support of any kind can be sent to:
DEFENSE COMMITTEE, P.O. BOX 5443,
Berkeley, Ca. 94705



Spray painting, S.F. Bay area, March 1974.

NAMIBIA WILL BE FREE

An Interview with
Aaron Shihepo



Rendition of a 6000 year old Namibian cave painting by
a young SWAPO militant.

Breakthrough is printing parts of a press conference with Aaron Shihepo, SWAPO Deputy Secretary for Foreign Relations, conducted when he visited the Bay Area in February 1978. This is a critical stage in the struggle of the Namibian people, who are fighting under the leadership of the South West African People's Organization (SWAPO) for independence and freedom. The growing strength of the Namibian people's war against South Africa's illegal occupation has forced the UN Security Council to take up its responsibility for decolonization of Namibia based on a recognition of SWAPO as the sole legitimate representative of the Namibian people. However, this is also a dangerous period for the Namibian people, as the imperialist powers make a last scramble to hold on to their power in Namibia.

Faced with the fall of their settler regime in Namibia, South Africa is dead set on a plan to install a puppet regime which will safeguard South Africa's economic, political and strategic interests in Namibia. Accordingly, Vorster's regime has embarked on a scorched earth campaign to liquidate SWAPO. Since April 1978, hundreds of SWAPO members and activists throughout Namibia have been arrested, detained without charges, and subjected to daily torture. On May 4, South African air and ground troops invaded the People's Republic of Angola and attacked the SWAPO civilian camp at Kassinga. Hundreds of Namibians, mostly children and old people, were murdered; vital food and medical supplies were destroyed. The actual South African response to the UN negotiations is a campaign to wipe out SWAPO and force its own "internal settlement solution" on Namibia.

At the same time, the US is pushing diplomatically for a more "liberal" solution to the Namibian situation even while it is supporting South Africa militarily and economically behind the scenes. (Paratroopers at the Kassinga raid arrived in American-made C-130 Hercules troop carriers.) Recent agreements between the five Western powers and SWAPO which were reached at Luanda are the basis for current discussions at the UN. However, SWAPO president Sam Nujoma has characterized the Western proposal as "a compromise plan which is in our view heavily weighed in favor of South Africa's colonial interests in Namibia." The US-led plan does not take a clear stand on Walvis Bay, which has been

the subject of sharp disagreements between Namibia and South Africa. SWAPO maintains that Walvis Bay, its only deep-water seaport, is an integral part of Namibia. However, South Africa is trying to keep control over the port, which is a key link in the oil and defense routes between the Middle East and the US. (See map.) Other main problems with the plan concern the continued presence of South African troops in Namibia and the terms of the UN supervision of elections.

While the US may be using different overt tactics from South Africa at this stage, the goal of both powers is to maintain imperialist control of Namibia. On the other hand, throughout the negotiations SWAPO has made clear its determination to win complete independence from colonialism. President Nujoma affirmed recently at the UN: "I would like to reassure the distinguished delegates that the Namibian people, under the leadership of SWAPO, will not succumb to neocolonial maneuvers and intrigues aimed at installing a puppet regime in Namibia, but will persevere and intensify the armed struggle, in the absence of any other acceptable alternative, until the whole of Namibia including Walvis Bay is totally liberated."

IMPERIALIST STRATEGY FOR SOUTHERN AFRICA

The growing strength of the Namibian people's war against colonial domination is part of the larger struggle against imperialism raging throughout southern Africa. Building on the victories in Angola, Guinea Bissau and Mozambique, all of southern Africa is moving rapidly towards independence. The US, South Africa and the other imperialist powers see the handwriting on the wall and are desperately trying to devise strategies that will delay the inevitable victory of national liberation struggles in southern Africa.

The struggle in Zimbabwe, led by the Patriotic Front, is now on the brink of victory. Ninety-five percent of the country is semi-liberated territory and fighting has broken out inside the capital city of Salisbury. The imperialist strategy being carried out against SWAPO and the Namibian people is basically the same as the one being directed against the Zimbabwean people and the Patriotic Front. It is a plan designed and led by the US. African puppet rulers who are completely tied to the

interests of the imperialists are put forward as the so-called "African leaders." In reality they have no popular support and get their power only from the military might of the imperialists. To prop up these puppet rulers, massive military repression is directed at the African masses in an effort to destroy the liberation organizations and break the will of the African people. Rhodesia and South Africa have taken hardline stances against

SOUTHERN AFRICA



The nations of Southern Africa are fighting together for the liberation of all African peoples, in the face of the plans of US imperialism and white settler regimes throughout the region.

"majority rule," allowing the United States to take public positions in favor of more "enlightened" neocolonial regimes. But Carter's "human rights" diplomacy in Zimbabwe, for instance, is the cover for a neocolonial strategy based on supplying oil, weapons and US mercenaries to the racist "internal settlement" regime.

The US and other imperialist powers see the interrelationship among the liberation struggles in southern Africa and the support which already liberated nations are able to give to armed struggles being waged now. They know that the political stability of Angola and Mozambique is a critical question for all of southern Africa. The intensification of the armed struggle in Namibia, for example, has been dependent on its rear bases in Angola. (See interview.) The attack on Kassinga, 150 miles inside Angola, was an effort to shake the People's Republic of Angola as well as to cripple SWAPO.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ZAIRE

The May 1978 invasion of Zaire is another example of the imperialist response to African internationalism. Zaire is an important base for the US because it is strategically located, rich in minerals and is controlled by a CIA-installed puppet, Mobutu Sese Seko. The armed attack led by the Congolese National Liberation Front and other patriotic Congolese forces against Mobutu, would have meant the collapse of his neocolonial regime. French and Belgian forces supported by US military personnel rushed into Zaire to suppress the liberation forces. At the same time, western-backed counter-revolutionary troops launched an attack from Zaire into Angola. This attack from the north followed within two weeks of the Kassinga raid attacking Angola from the south.

The US role in attacking Zaire was also aimed at making direct US military intervention in southern Africa a politically viable alternative within the US. Faced with the defeat of the present US strategy for Zimbabwe (massive undercover military assistance and the Anglo-American plan for neocolonialism) Carter is using accusations of Cuban and Russian supposed "aggression" in Africa to call for the removal of congressional blocks to regular US troop involvement. A recent vote in Congress to lift the embargo against Rhodesia in December marks a

determination to escalate US military intervention in southern Africa.

The US propaganda machine is playing a major role in building support for escalating the US war against Africa. Newspapers, radio and TV justified the use of European and North American troops in Zaire by mounting a white supremacist campaign aimed at mobilizing white people in the US against the Congolese people. They spread outrageous lies about "rampaging blacks in Zaire massacring defenseless white people" when in fact it was the masses of African people who were massacred by the Western invasion forces. The "defenseless" white settlers are really the colonizers and oppressors of the Congolese people. The Zaire campaign was followed by a similar media attack accusing the Patriotic Front of killing missionaries, who in reality were murdered by the Rhodesian army because of their support for the liberation forces.

The characterization of African people as an ominous threat to white survival is also geared toward building hatred of Black people within the borders of the US. It is part of the state's strategy to organize white working class people in the US to support imperialist efforts to crush African liberation in Africa and in the US.

In the face of the escalation of US diplomatic and military involvement in southern Africa, we in the US oppressor nation have a serious responsibility to strengthen our solidarity with the liberation struggles in southern Africa and to militantly attack the role of the US state. In order to build a mass anti-imperialist movement in genuine solidarity with national liberation in southern Africa, we must directly oppose the increasing efforts to organize popular white supremacist support for the US role.

Taking leadership from the national liberation movements is the only way we can build solidarity with their strategies to defeat imperialism. We believe that the following interview with Aaron Shihepo provides a powerful analysis of the liberation movement in Namibia and the relationship among the different struggles in southern Africa. It develops perspectives which are critical for us to understand at this time in order to build anti-imperialist movement which effectively supports all the liberation struggles and attacks the US strategy for the entire region of southern Africa.

AARON SHIHEPO: Friends, ladies and gentlemen of the press, let me express my thanks for us to have the chance to meet today, and to talk about the situation in Namibia, which has been brought about because of the presence there of the illegal South African regime which has embarked upon oppressing, suppressing the aspirations of the Namibian people. This regime has been able to defy and flout the decisions and resolutions of the international community for a long time because of the consistent support, materially and diplomatically, she receives from her allies, especially from the western countries, including the United States.

She has been able to be in Namibia because of the exploitation of the Namibian resources, which benefit her in terms of taxes which she gets from the multinational companies which are exploiting the wealth of Namibia. This includes companies from the United States, for example those companies which are mining copper. These companies have been able to make arrangements and contracts with the illegal South African regime in Namibia because they have been given the OK by their national governments, because of the credit they receive from their national governments, and some of them because of the double taxation agreements they have with their governments which means they can pay taxes to South Africa and are exempted from taxes to their national governments.



BT photo

Aaron Shihepo



The struggle in Namibia is not isolated from the struggle in the surrounding countries still under colonialism as well as the struggle of all progressive humanity, who refuse to live under the bondage of exploitation and oppression. It is precisely because of the support rendered to the Namibian people, through SWAPO, the vanguard of the Namibian revolution, that the people of Namibia today are able to wage the struggle on many fronts. They are able to wage the armed struggle against the illegal troops of South Africa in Namibia, they are able to wage political struggle, to have political mobilization in Namibia, to heighten the political consciousness of the Namibian people, to concretize the people's resistance against the Namibian occupation by the South African illegal forces. They are able to expose in the world community the barbaric massacres of women, children and of the old by South Africa; and all the inhuman treatment perpetrated by South Africa in Namibia today. They appeal to the men and women of good will in the world community to render the possible assistance they can to the cause of independence and justice in Namibia. With these introductory remarks I would like to let the press ask questions.

Q: We would like to know particularly what led up to the initiation of the armed struggle in 1966?

A: The launching of the armed struggle in Namibia came as a result of the waning of trust the Namibian people had in the international community, especially both the United Nations and the International Court of Justice.

SWAPO, when it started, was a peaceful movement. And we thought that by peaceful methods, maybe South Africa would be able to be persuaded to leave Namibia. However, when the Namibian men and women and children demonstrated in Windhoek especially in 1959, in December, South Africa assaulted us with guns. Eleven people were killed and more than 50 wounded. Since then there has been constant harassment and brutal repression of the Namibian people whenever there have been demonstrations against South Africa in Namibia. The people of Namibia saw that other methods should be applied. And on the 26th of August, 1966, we decided to launch armed struggle. These are the conditions which led to the launching of our armed struggle.

Q: There have been reports in the press recently about prolonged battles between SWAPO guerrillas and South Africa, and I'm wondering if you see that as reflecting an acceleration to a new stage of armed struggle. Could you describe that situation?

A: Today there is really war going on in Namibia, but there are specific factors which have helped to contribute to the intensification of the armed struggle in Namibia. If you go back a little bit in history, you find that the Namibian people has a long history of resisting any domination. That's why the Germans killed two-thirds of the population in the central part of Namibia during the colonialization.

For some time Namibia was not exposed to borders with independent African countries. For some time only Zambia had borders with Namibia, a frontier of less than 100 miles. However, even under those conditions, the Namibian people waged the struggle, with Zambia as the rear base, especially for logistic reinforcement for our forces in Namibia. But with the advent of the independence of the People's Republic of Angola, then the geographical situation changed tremendously, because then you have a country which has borders with Namibia of about 1,400 kilometers, a country which came into being also committed to support the liberation struggles of people still under colonialism. Consequently we had more area to operate from, more area to reinforce our logistic supplies in Namibia. There are some other factors, also, because then the troops of

aggression of South Africa in Namibia knew very well that Angola is not a toy to play with. They learned a lesson when they invaded Angola and did not even have time to pack up when they were running back. This, of course, had psychological impact upon the Namibian people, and gave them courage.

As a result, we extended our area of operation in the field from the north to the northwest. We also intensified the armed operation from the North towards the central part of the country. Ever since, there have been many military actions around towns in the central part of the country, including an attack on Windhoek itself, which the enemy could not hide and was forced to admit.

Today SWAPO is in a position to demonstrate to the world the concrete arms and ammunition which we have captured from the enemy. Today we are using some of the trucks and jeeps in our transportation system which we have captured from the enemy. Today we are in a position to show the world pieces of South African air force and helicopters which we have downed, and in a position to capture South African soldiers.

All these are testimonies of the intensity of the armed struggle in Namibia, but we are still intensifying it more until the enemy is forced to quit Namibia.

Q: Can you talk about the relationship between the national liberation struggle in Namibia, led by SWAPO, and the national liberation movements in Angola, Zimbabwe, Azania, Mozambique?

A: In the first place, Angola and Mozambique have attained their independence and they are both engaged in the economic and ideological transformation of their societies. Organizational work is tremendous in those countries, but in spite of that there is an element which binds them to the cause of the national liberation struggle in those countries still under colonialism. They give concrete material support to the national liberation movements, by serving as rear bases to the national liberation struggles in Namibia and Zimbabwe and South Africa, as well as serving as a platform from which we can let the world know what is happening.

Furthermore, this is very essential for them also. If you take just the example of Angola and Namibia, you have Namibia, which has been used



"The Namibian people has a long history of resisting any domination."

during the invasion of Angola, and is used from time to time by South Africa as a springboard for provocative acts. All the army trucks, air force and so on, take off at the big base at Grootfontein in Namibia.

South Africa's army of occupation in Namibia works hand in hand with the counter-revolutionaries of UNITA in order to attack the People's Republic of Angola, and to disrupt the armed operation of SWAPO, as well as our political operation. These counter-revolutionaries are put in the uniforms of SWAPO after training, sent into villages, infiltrated into villages either in Angola, especially on the borders, or they go into villages in Namibia and try to harass the villagers. Actually they not only harass, they commit atrocities in villages, and many people have died in the process. Then, of course, propaganda is made that SWAPO and FAPLA, which is the army of Angola, are engaged in extermination of villagers and they are raping women in these villages and so on, which is not true. It is the work of South Africa.

At this particular junction there is a scheme of recruiting the Cubans who have fled to the United States, and Chilean reactionaries, to the

South African army bases. Most of them are already army men. So they are acquainted with the terrain, and they are put in the military uniforms of FAPLA, and infiltrated, especially towards the border of Angola. In the villages, whether it is on the Namibian side or Angolan side, they carry out exactly the same. Then of course, the propaganda goes out that "these are the Cubans, didn't you hear them speaking Spanish, and didn't you see their uniforms of MPLA soldiers." So it is indispensable for the newly independent countries such as Angola and Mozambique to express their solidarity by giving concrete support to the national liberation movements.

Among the liberation movements themselves, especially in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia, you have to remember that although these are three different countries, at the core of the problem is South Africa. Why am I saying it's the core of the problem? Of course, the American godfather is really the imperialism which is at the core, but I am confining it to that region; I just reduce it a little bit to explain. Why? Because in spite of the sanctions against Rhodesia today, there is no other country whereby Rhodesia ships her goods to the outside world to her trading

partners but through South Africa. This is the only outlet—because she has been cut off from either Angola or from Mozambique—so all of it goes via South Africa. This enables the regime of Ian Smith to survive. South Africa, including the army of South Africa, has been involved in the war of liberation both in Zimbabwe and of course automatically in Namibia. Today the forces of Ian Smith and those South African forces in Namibia are able to carry out their atrocities because of the constant supply they get from South Africa. It is automatic that if Namibia is free, or if Zimbabwe is free, it is inevitable that we render assistance to the South African people through the liberation movement.

When the political situation becomes explosive in South Africa itself, to us that is a contribution, because that, in itself, will force the troops of aggression of Vorster to reduce their concentration, if not to withdraw from Namibia and Zimbabwe, and concentrate on the home front to cope with the situation there. That will then contribute to the acceleration of the process of independence in Namibia and Zimbabwe, because then you have to deal with fewer troops and fewer sophisticated weapons. In other words, the situation in the whole of southern Africa is so interconnected that the unity of purpose and action among the liberation movements is of paramount importance. And it is in this light we see the importance of the unity among the liberation movements in their fight against the common enemy.

Q: Could you talk briefly about the specific role of women in the Namibian struggle?

A: Women in Namibia are an integral part of the struggle in Namibia, and it is from this point of view that we approach the issue. We believe that the struggle for the Namibian people should be waged by all Namibian citizens who detest, and who openly refuse to be under the slave system of South Africa in Namibia. This includes women.

Both men and women have to wage the struggle on an equal level. And in any organ of our movement you find both women and men, be it in the farms or in PLAN, the People's Liberation Army of Namibia; be it in the Central Committee or in the Executive, you have men and women. Many of the commanders of our armed forces are women. When there is an attack to be

carried out against the enemy forces, we do not single out, because this is not a matter of men or women, it is a matter of SWAPO. In the projects or programs carried out by SWAPO in the settlements, both in Zambia and in Angola, where you have the civilian part of the population (I am using the word civilian in the vague sense, because to us, each and every one is really a combatant as well, but I am saying civilian in the sense that we carry out mostly civilian activities in these settlements, such as education, health, agriculture and so on) in the positions of responsibilities there are men and women.

In our settlement in Zambia, for example, it is a woman who is directing. I don't really want to get into individual things, but I can assure you that women in Namibia are participating on an equal level as their men folks. If you hear that two freedom fighters died today, they might be women or men. Women have been excellent in carrying out many functions in SWAPO. There are many areas, actually, especially in the security sphere, where their performances are the most excellent.

I want to also talk about those women who are not on the battlefield, or not officially in the structure of SWAPO or involved in such programs. The South African colonial economy is surviving because of the contract system, whereby men leave their families behind in order to work in the industrialized sector of the economy, which is located in what is known as the police zone—this means the area which is normally considered as for whites only. The workers are not allowed to be accompanied by their wives or their families, so they have to stay away for from eighteen months to two years time. It is the women in those reserves who look after the family. You have to remember that workers earn practically nothing, and are unable really to send any financial assistance to their families back in the reserves. Maybe after five or six months, a man might be able to send twenty or thirty dollars.

At the head of the family is a woman who makes sure that the children are fed and that they are looked after. She has to struggle under very difficult conditions because their agricultural survival really depends on rain; there's not any provision whereby the illegal regime of South Africa assists the non-white population in agriculture or famine at all. While, of course, the

white population is provided for in the credit system as well as other incentives.

So you find that women have to look after the families, but in spite of these prime responsibilities, because they are left behind, they never complain. They fulfill their obligation, as well as other obligations, such as making sure that when the combatants of SWAPO enter a certain village, they are taken care of, they are fed—they have to share the little the families have—they are protected from any exposure to the South African forces in Namibia, and then are taken care of to proceed to carry out their missions, and they are well informed about the movements of the enemy troops within a given locality.

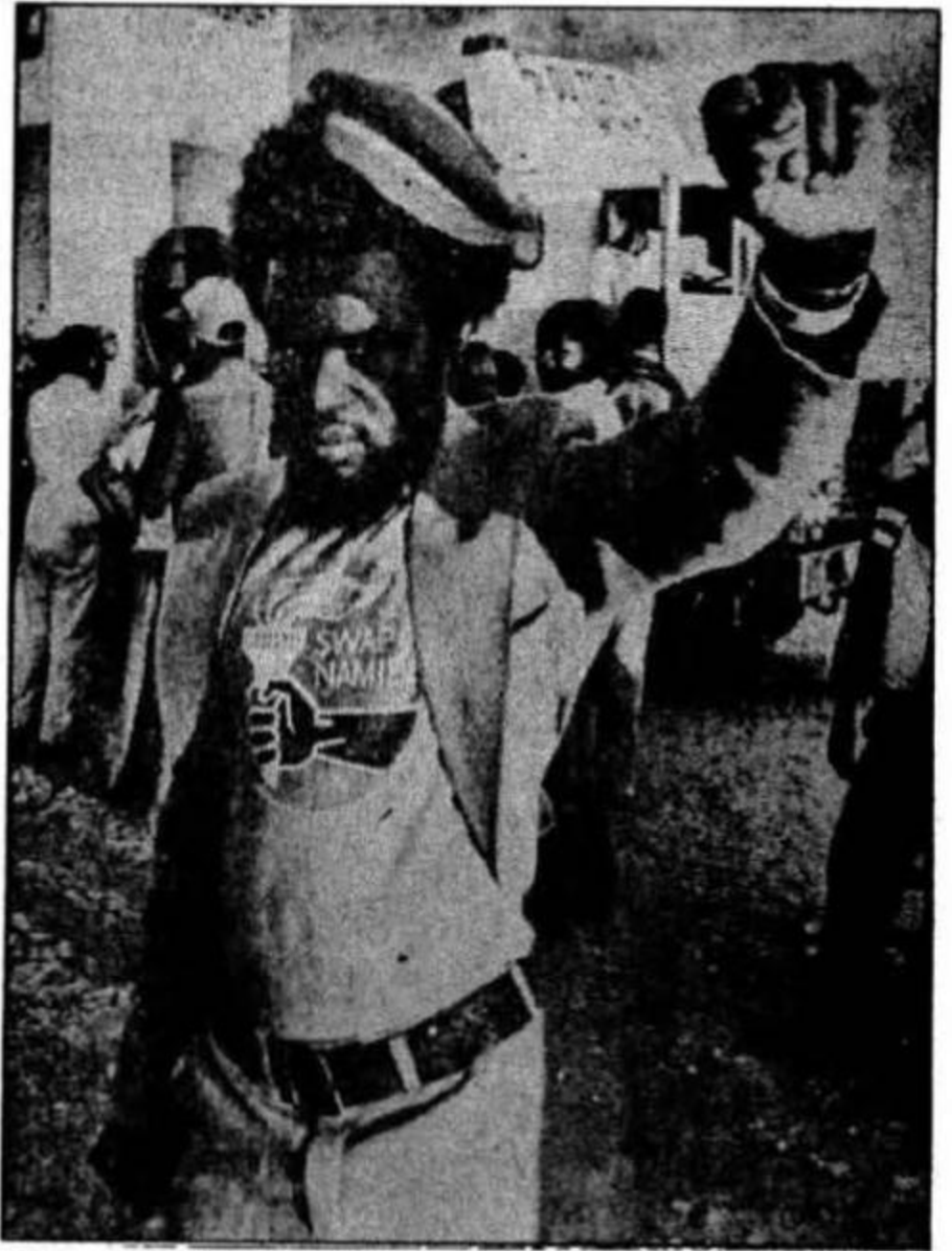
Q: Can you talk about how the United States government is working with the South African government to try to impose a neo-colonial solution before there is a military defeat?

*A: In Namibia today, what is going on is contact by the Gang of Five, which is the United States, France, Canada, the Federal Republic of Germany and the United Kingdom, all of which are the current members of the Security Council. Probably I am a little bit qualified to talk about this, because I have been in the team which has been talking to the Gang of Five.**

In any case, all of these countries, without any exception, are deeply involved, or their multinational companies are deeply involved in the exploitation of Namibian mineral resources.

These countries have taken upon themselves to contact South Africa with a view "to find a peaceful solution for the Namibian question" in the framework of the UN decisions and resolutions, especially Resolution 385 of January, 1976 of the Security Council, which among other things says that South Africa should withdraw all their troops from Namibia; South Africa should release all Namibian political prisoners, whether they are jailed in South Africa or Namibia; South Africa should respect the territorial integrity of Namibia; and elections should be held under the supervision and control of the United Nations.

However, the fact remains that these countries have started contacts not because all of



NY Times

This photo by a NY Times reporter in Walvis Bay makes clear the irrepressible support for SWAPO among the Namibian people.

a sudden they start loving the Namibian people, but because they would like to preserve favorable trading positions with Namibia and they think that they would be remembered as saviors who have contributed to the solution of the Namibian question. Besides that, of course, they think that if the war goes on, as effective as it is, then the whole population of Namibia might be so radicalized that any future cooperation with these countries would be ruled out. So these are their real main concerns.

Now, they don't say so. They say they want to find a solution for the Namibian people. Then one can ask what have they been doing all along? This question has been with the United Nations from the very inception and their initiatives are too late and too little.

Let me say something about why we do talk to them. They do talk to South Africa, and, after talking to South Africa, they also talk to SWAPO. We have made our position very clear. We hold

*These discussions led to the Luanda Joint Communiqué of July 12, 1978 between SWAPO and the representatives of the five Western governments, in which the two delegations agreed on terms to open negotiations in the UN Security Council about the decolonization process of Namibia.

the view that the Namibian question is a responsibility of the world community and these countries are members of the world community—I'm referring to the United Nations, since on the books Namibia is supposed to be under the United Nations. SWAPO started as a peaceful organization, and any member state of the international community, whether individually or collectively, if they think that they can find a peaceful solution for Namibia, they are free to take initiatives to contact South Africa, and so on.

However, we also made it very, very clear from the very inception of the contacts, that it should be understood by the Gang of Five that their interests and ours are not identical at all, and can never be identical. We reminded them that the history of the United Nations and the history of Namibia is the testimony of their constant support of the South African regime. We also told them that this is not the first time that such diplomatic initiatives have been taken. But all these initiatives failed and South Africa, for a long time, has taken us for a ride. Therefore, we told them that we were very, very pessimistic that their contacts would bring any solutions at all. But if they feel that they are going to do something, they are free to do so like any other member is free to do so. It is on this basis that we have been talking to them.

I think that our suspicion has confirmed exactly what we were saying, because South Africa, although she is trying to convince the world that she has abandoned her policy of dividing up Namibia, and is no longer interested in the implementation of the bantustanization of Namibia, what she is doing is exactly what she says she is not doing. The Turnhalle Tribal Talks, or so-called constitutional talks, which was then a conglomeration of different tribal puppets and quislings was officially supposed to have been stopped by South Africa. In other words, South Africa was saying that she is no longer talking about drafting the constitution for dividing up Namibia into eleven mini-states, ten for the Blacks (because she claims that there are ten nations among the Blacks) and one nation among the whites.

That process is *not* stopped. For example, in Namibia today you have areas which are declared by South Africa's illegal regime to be under martial law. These areas to the east, north and northwest, are where SWAPO is effectively giving them hell. In these areas no gathering of

more than three people is allowed.

But then, with the help of South African troops and security arrangements, these puppets and quislings are allowed to have meetings in these areas. They are assisted by South Africa financially and transport-wise. Furthermore, South Africa is still training tribal armies, in conformity with the concept of eleven mini-states or Bantustans. The eleventh one is supposed to be for the all white community, which covers the largest part of Namibia and all the minerals so far known in Namibia. The African people are earmarked to stay on very arid land where there is no rain, no minerals, nothing at all.

South Africa is still continuing with the training of these tribal armies. She has already trained four of them and is in the process of training some more. Since she said that she has stopped this process of dividing of the country, she has inaugurated legislative assemblies in two of the Bantustans. Now, these are not signs of a regime which is prepared, as it wants the world to believe, to let the people of Namibia proceed to independence. This is exactly on the contrary.

Then, on top of that, on the first of September, 1977, South Africa announced that she has annexed Walvis Bay. Walvis Bay is the only deep-water seaport of Namibia (We have some other ports, but on a smaller scale.) This port handles 90% of the export of Namibia. For South Africa to annex this and make it a part of South Africa itself, is an effort to hold Namibia at ransom, and we in SWAPO cannot allow such an exercise.

Q: Could you talk about how you see the responsibilities of people who support the liberation of southern Africa within this country?

A: When you talk about the liberation struggle in Namibia, then you talk about the responsibility of SWAPO. And it is SWAPO that takes care of each and every Namibian who is in the struggle, who has left Namibia, for example. That means education, feeding, clothing, transport, health care and the project of self-reliance as far as agriculture is concerned. All these are done by SWAPO and nobody else. But, of course, you have to know that SWAPO is a movement and as such, depends on men and women of good will, and progressive mankind. There are certain countries which have realized the brutality of South Africa and who openly declare their



Namibia solidarity demonstration, San Francisco. Active solidarity with the national liberation struggles of Southern Africa must be built on a massive scale.

support or alliance, their identification with the struggle of the Namibian people waged by SWAPO. And as such they give aid on humanitarian grounds.

But when you are talking about the responsibility of SWAPO you are talking about the responsibility of thousands and thousands of men and women, the old and the children. There are many things people can do. I believe that your activities in mobilizing the American population is a great contribution to our struggle; a great contribution in the sense that the American people would be aware of what is happening in Namibia. They will be aware of the intricacies and the implications of their governments in Namibia and southern Africa as a whole, and they will be aware of the role played by the companies, American companies with the blessing of the American government. And only when they know about this, then they will be able to act to put pressure both on the government and companies, to withdraw from their entanglement, and from their unholy alliance with the apartheid regime.

There are many other things which you can gather, simple material for school, old clothes for children or for grownups, and items such as walkie-talkies which are essential among our forces, or cameras to enable us to take pictures

and to show the world the misery the Namibian people are living under. These are a few items I mention, but whatever financial contribution you can make, small as it might appear, to us it is right. Even if we can succeed to buy let us say three napkins for three children, that is a contribution to our struggle.

So it is entirely upon you and others who support our struggle to see into all directions which area they can help more, and which areas are impossible. So that whatever contribution you can make is a great contribution as far as we are concerned, to the Namibian people, who are suffering daily oppression by South Africa. □



BREAKTHROUGH

An Evaluation

We want to strengthen *Breakthrough's* ability to struggle for anti-imperialist political consciousness and practice. To do this, *Breakthrough* needs to be open to struggle about its contents, purpose and direction.

Breakthrough developed in the context of the struggle against the dominant opportunist politics of the white left. We believe that it has made a contribution to revolutionary anti-imperialism. However, *Breakthrough* has also had major weaknesses, reflecting the errors of PFOC's overall political line. In many ways PFOC saw our organization as the leadership for anti-imperialist politics in the oppressor nation, discounting the actual leadership of revolutionary nationalist forces in the development of anti-imperialist line. We defined our own strategies for building international solidarity and political struggle outside of the leadership and strategies of national liberation. These errors affected the contents of *Breakthrough*.

For instance, we understood that an important responsibility that *Breakthrough* could fulfill was to print and help circulate materials from oppressed nation revolutionary forces. But we chose materials to print according to our own priorities and struggles instead of understanding the priorities of the national liberation movements. At times we used the writings of national liberation forces opportunistically to reinforce political struggles we were engaged in. We printed two criticisms of the WUO, one from Native American Warriors (BT No. 1) and one from the Panther 21 (BT Nos. 3-4), in order to further *our* exposure of the WUO.

In taking on the struggle against opportunism as a major obstacle to the development of international solidarity and revolution in the oppressor nation working class, we did not always keep the goal of building solidarity with national liberation primary. We carried out the struggle against opportunism on white supremacist terms, arguing for *our* line and leadership as the alternative to opportunism instead of arguing for the leading political lines of revolutionary nationalist forces.

Our tendency to exceptionalize our own leadership caused us to limit struggle with other oppressor nation forces. We didn't print material from other white anti-imperialists and we didn't engage political criticisms from oppressor nation forces.

These are just a few expressions of our line errors. We are struggling to rectify our politics in the world by being responsible to the political leadership of national liberation. We have extended the self-criticism begun in the last issue of *Breakthrough* by reexamining our analysis of IWY and our political line on women's liberation. We have struggled to put forth materials from oppressed nation forces guided by their priorities. We are trying to promote more struggle over the contents of *Breakthrough* by initiating a correspondence section and printing this evaluation.

We believe that political struggle for revolutionary internationalist politics is critical for building international solidarity and anti-imperialist movement in the oppressor nation. We think *Breakthrough* can play a positive role towards this goal. We urge our readers to actively join the struggle with us. □

CORRESPONDENCE

Breakthrough is beginning a correspondence section to encourage discussion of political issues and the perspectives presented in the journal. These first letters are from prisoners. They reflect the serious feedback and dialog that many comrades from oppressor and oppressed nations who are locked down inside prison have initiated with *Breakthrough* and PFOC. They are being printed anonymously for security reasons.

We hope more readers will begin to share their views with us.

March 21, 1978

I just got finished reading Vol 1, No. 3 & 4 of *Breakthrough*, the first issue I've ever seen, and was quite impressed by your anti-colonialist, anti-racist ideology and firm support for the Black Liberation Movement, Native American Movement in general and the BLA in particular. Also from reading *Burning Spear* and reports from other comrades it appears that your stance is not mere rhetoric but that you have made definite contributions towards building a working unity with the APSP and the BLA. Obviously you correctly realize the legitimate struggle of the various colonized people within U.S. borders to struggle for self-determination and national independence, very much unlike so many so-called marxist-leninists with their dogmatic vulgarization of the universal science of ML and dialectical materialism.

This phenomena can only be explained by a racist and chauvinistic attitude which has its roots in the institutionalized racist consciousness affecting successive generations of whites. From personal observations and practice of waging struggle with many good white comrades this tendency seems to be unconscious or automatic. So I guess it will take much struggle to effectively deal with it.

Your article entitled "What the guardian guards" was very good, had a lot of historical data to strengthen the position. You are commended for such vigorous research and defense of this revolutionary stance. Just today I read the (latest) Jan 18th issue of the *guardian* and was disgusted with Silber's latest profanity. He didn't even have the courage to use your name, instead he relied on innuendo and deceit. His attempt to subvert the real issues, misquoting and shrouding facts as being counter-revolutionary statements in support of the state along with his arrogant and brash manner makes him very suspect! The weapons of criticism come in varying degrees!!

With revolutionary greetings . . .

Correction: The picture on p. 84 of *BT* vol II #1 is the logo of the Lesbian Schoolworkers organization. We didn't know this when we used the picture and want to apologize for any confusion we caused.

SUBSCRIBE!

We want to build the circulation and distribution of *Breakthrough* and of our other materials. We want to deepen the political basis of our relationship with subscribers and with people who are interested in helping to distribute the journal. We would like to develop a network of bookstores, libraries, organizations and individuals that will carry *Breakthrough*. Please get in touch if you can help.

PLEASE SEND ME

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Dear people,

I'm a prisoner at Lewisburg; I'm just one of many who is imprisoned for struggling against the fascist prison system and order.

I send you my deepest and warmest feeling of solidarity and commend you for your support of prisoners and your stand against white male supremacy-imperialism. Your support for prisoners is especially appreciated, since much of the so-called left has forgotten or avoided supporting prisoners, who are subjected to the most ruthless and utmost oppression; and have given very little support to the freedom fighters who have fallen victim to prison oppression.

I support your criticism of the Guardian — in short, the Guardian has avoided supporting the prison struggle and some progressive groups or organizations; they have virulently attacked them, kindling dissension and divisiveness. The Guardian has went so far as to call freedom fighters — who risked their lives in the fight against fascism — “terrorists.” They have supported reactionary governments — that have sided with imperialists — in different parts of the world. Keep up your criticism, and good work.

In the spirit of unity of all oppressed — of all colors — against the fascist-imperialists that prey upon us.

A prisoner

Dear Comrades,

...I am in agreement with you on the Puerto Rican situation and strongly believe that anti-imperialists should strongly support all righteous liberation struggles. I feel at this time there should be a strong show of solidarity with the PLO. The Palestinian people are facing extinction as a result of undisguised Zionist-Imperialist genocide.

...The right continues with their growth in prisons. I read a few days ago where NY State was ordered by a Federal court to reinstate a prison guard that had been suspended for being a Klan member. The growing coalition between white guards and inmates is frightening. How *anyone* could cooperate with one of his keepers in a koncentration kamp is beyond my comprehension. This in itself reflects on the amount of racist indoctrination that is being infiltrated in the system on *all* levels.

...You are right about the building of a strong working class. This is a job that will require a tremendous effort. I am in West Va. and know members of the UMW. I see in left pubs about the strong support of the coal miners etc. and agree 100% but what also has to be considered is that when the miners are placated and back to work, 75% of them in this area are white, right-wing, commie-haters and only support “labor” for their own benefit. This is what we are up against in building the working class....

Sincerely . . .

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- ☐ Please enter my subscription to **Breakthrough** beginning with issue _____. Subscriptions are \$6.00 regular, \$15.00 institutional, free to prisoners, for 4 issues.

Please make checks payable to John Brown Book Club. POB 40614, SF CA 94110.

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WHO WE ARE

Since the first publication of *Breakthrough* in spring '77, the description of "Who We Are" has gone through many changes which reflect continual struggle and change in PFOC's politics. This current description of "Who We Are" defines our basic politics at this stage of struggle.

Prairie Fire Organizing Committee is a communist organization of women and men based in the US oppressor nation. We are united around revolutionary anti-imperialist politics which define the principle characteristic of the imperialist system as the division of the world into oppressor and oppressed nations. We believe that the movements of oppressed nations for independence and freedom — the national liberation movements — are leading the worldwide defeat of imperialism.

We are committed to building active solidarity with national liberation and support the right of self-determination for colonized nations inside and outside of current US borders. Within the borders of the US, as around the world, oppressed nations are leading the development of revolutionary anti-imperialist movement. The oppressor nation working class can only participate in the development of revolutionary movement by fighting in solidarity with national liberation and by supporting the leadership and strategies of these movements.

Based on the immense wealth gained from the plunder of land, labor and resources of colonized people, the US ruling class has institutionalized privilege and power for white people through the system of white supremacy. This gives the oppressor nation working class a material stake in imperialism and has meant that historically the dominant aspect of its relationship to empire has been collaboration instead of opposition. A determined and continual struggle against white supremacist consciousness and activities which place the interests of the oppressor nation working class against the interests of oppressed nations is necessary in order to build anti-imperialist class struggle in the oppressor nation.

We are committed to exposing and defeating opportunist political lines in the white left which deny the leading role of national liberation and the existence of oppressed nations within current US borders. These politics support imperialism and hold back the development of revolutionary consciousness and practice in the oppressor nation.

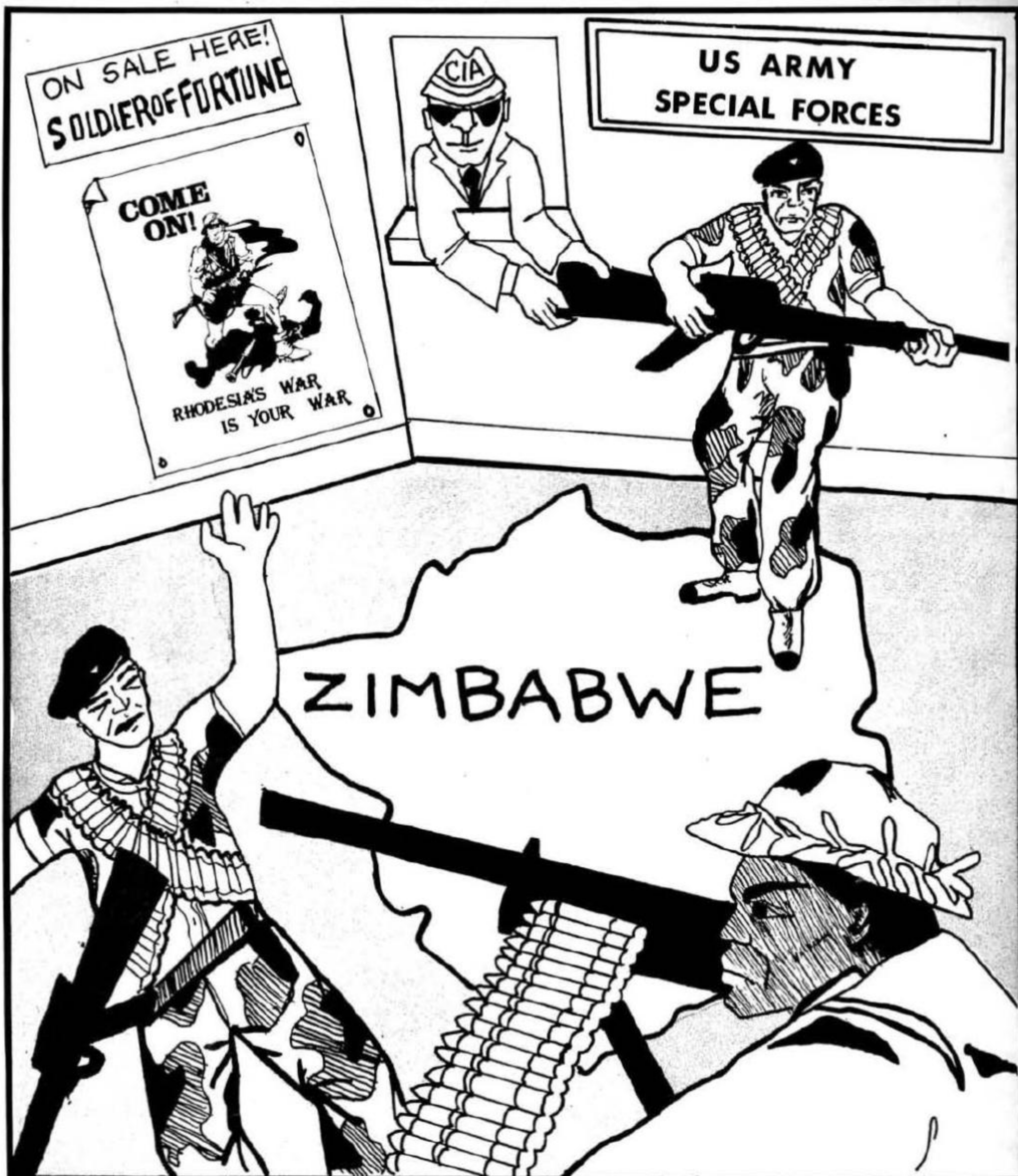
We believe that imperialism materially depends on the oppression of women which is institutionalized through the system of male supremacy. National liberation movements have led in making the struggle for women's liberation a central part of anti-imperialist revolution. We are committed to fight for women's liberation and against male supremacy in the oppressor nation as an essential part of building revolutionary movement. We see the oppression of lesbians and gay men as rooted in the system of male supremacy and support the struggle for lesbian and gay liberation. We are committed to struggle within the women's and gay movements for international solidarity and against white supremacy.

We know that imperialism can only maintain itself on the basis of armed force and violence. There can be no victory over imperialism without armed struggle. Oppressor nation revolutionaries must commit themselves to armed struggle in solidarity with the wars of national liberation which are waging around the world.

As communists in the oppressor nation, we have a responsibility to organize white people around revolutionary anti-imperialist politics, to develop strategies for international solidarity and socialist revolution which support the strategies of national liberation. Communist organization must be built in order to carry out these political objectives. We must struggle to apply the principles of dialectical and historical materialism to develop correct line and strategy and to use criticism-self-criticism to evaluate and correct our politics and practice.

At this stage, the struggle to unite a core of white people around anti-imperialist, internationalist politics and practice is a priority. We see our journal, *Breakthrough*, as making a contribution to this struggle.

In carrying out all these responsibilities, we are committed to struggling against all forms of white supremacy, opportunism, male supremacy and arrogance among ourselves. We are accountable to the national liberation movements for what we do. □



**STOP U.S. RECRUITMENT OF MERCENARIES
STOP ALL U.S. INTERVENTION IN ZIMBABWE
VICTORY TO THE PATRIOTIC FRONT**